



**Murphy Fire-Rescue/Fire Marshal Office**  
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**Tent/Membrane Structure**  
Tents/Bounce Houses

**Effective Date:** 8/1/13

**Summary:** Fire Department requirements for the Permit issuance and safe operation of a Tent/Membrane Structure.

**Purpose**

To establish minimum fire and/or life safety guidelines for the use and operation of tents, air-supported membranes structures within the City of Murphy.

**Scope**

These guidelines are to be followed when a group, facility, residential subdivision, or multi-family dwelling unit, within the City of Murphy, requests the use of a temporary structure. A temporary structure shall be a tent, canopy, air-supported, air-inflated or tensioned membrane structure.

All Tent and Membrane Structures for the purposes of this guideline and any other guidelines or requirements of the Fire Department shall conform to the 2006 International Fire Code, as adopted and amended by City of Murphy Ordinance No. 09-03-789.

These guidelines are necessarily general in scope and should be applied with appropriate professional judgment and common sense in consideration of the overall fire and life safety situation.

This guide does not replace, nor supersede any adopted codes and/or ordinances adopted by the City of Murphy, or determinations and positions of the Fire Chief or Fire Marshal.

**Permits**

- 1) A permit is required when the tent or membrane structure has an area in excess of 200 sq. ft. and canopies in excess of 400 sq. ft. For uses where several smaller tents (10 X 10) are used and these are located directly adjacent to one another, a permit may be required subject to the review of the Fire Marshal.

**Definition:**

**Canopy.** A structure, enclosure or shelter constructed of fabric or pliable materials supported by any manner, except by air or the contents it protects, and is open without sidewalls or drops on 75 percent or more of the perimeter.

**Membrane Structure:** An air-inflated, air-supported, cable or frame-covered structure as defined by the *International Building Code* and not otherwise defined as a tent or canopy.

**Tent:** A structure, enclosure or shelter constructed of fabric or pliable material supported by any manner except by air or the contents that it protects.

**Crowd Manager**

- 1) A crowd manager may be required for larger events where the total number of person attended exceeds 1,000, or when determined by the Fire Marshal.
- 2) The minimum number of crowd managers shall be established at a ratio of 1 for every 250 persons.

**Requirements**

In general, such fires shall comply with the provisions of the 2006 International Fire Code and the adopted local amendments to such codes as stated below:

- 1) A minimum of 20 ft. clear width shall be provided around the tent, and shall be no closer than 20 ft. to lot lines, buildings, other temporary structures, vehicles. Support ropes and guy wires are not included. Exceptions apply for tents that do not provide cooking operations and comply with Section 2403.8.
- 2) The structure shall not be located within a fire lane or public street.
- 3) Fire apparatus access roads shall be provided.
- 4) Smoking, cooking or use of open flames in the tent shall not be permitted. If cooking is to be used, a separate dedicated cooking tent operation shall be used. Additional requirements shall apply.
- 5) Approved "No Smoking" signs shall be conspicuously posted.

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- 6) Exits, with a minimum width of 6ft. each, shall be provided and kept clear at all times. The number of exits shall be determined by the occupant load and Table 2410.2. Exit signs shall be self-luminous or shall be internally or externally illuminated.
- 7) A minimum of a 12 foot "fire break" shall be provided around the exterior of the tent/membrane structure that is free of guy ropes or other obstructions.
- 8) Certification or affirmation of the following shall be provided from the manufacturer or providing agency:
  - A. Fire resistance rating provided.
  - B. Date last treated.
  - C. Type of chemical.
- 9) Hay, straw, shavings or similar combustible materials shall not be located within any tent or air-supported structure.
- 10) Open flame or other devices emitting flames, fire or heat or any flammable or combustible liquids, gas, or charcoal shall not be permitted under the tent or located within 20 ft., unless specifically approved and permitted.
- 11) Warming of foods and similar operations using solid flammables or other similar devices that do not pose a fire hazard, shall be permitted.
- 12) If heating and cooking devices are approved, they shall not be located within 10 ft. of an exit or combustible materials. These distances may be increased based upon the type and hazard of the cooking.
- 13) A minimum of one 2A-10BC fire extinguisher shall be provided for each tent less than 3,000 sq. ft. or less than 75 ft. across.
- 14) A minimum of 3 ft. clearance shall be provided from the inside material of the tent, canopy or membrane structure and the interior contents.
- 15) All applicable requirements of Chapter 24, Tents and Membrane Structures shall be met.

To expedite the plan review and inspection processes, please refer to the information listed below.

**Submittal Requirements**

- 1) A detailed site and floor plan.
- 2) Indicate details of the means of egress.
- 3) Seating or occupancy capacity. (To include a table and seating diagram)
- 4) Exits and exit pathways indicated on the floor plan.
- 5) Use of the tent or membrane structure.
- 6) Will cooking or heating devices be within or near the tent? If so, information regarding the cooking operation must be submitted concurrent with the permit review.
- 7) Locations of fire extinguishers.
- 8) Certification of fire resistance rating provided, date last treated and chemical treated with.
- 9) Fire Department access route and nearest fire hydrants.
- 10) Additional information based upon use and hazards.

Submittals that do not conform to the minimum above requirements will not be approved.

**General Requirements**

- 1) Installation, fabrication or otherwise construction is prohibited without approved plans and permit.
- 2) Each submittal shall have a completed Murphy Fire Department Plan Review/Permit Application.
- 3) Plans approved by the Fire Marshal's Office give authorization for construction. Final approvals are subject to field verification. Any approval issued by the Fire Marshal's Office does not release the contractor or property owner from the responsibility of full compliance with all applicable codes and ordinances relating to the construction project.
- 4) All installations must concur with the approved plans. Any deviation from the approved plans requires a re-submittal to the Fire Marshal's Office.
- 5) All fire department inspection forms and permits shall be kept in a permit packet on the job site until final inspection.

**Inspection Requirements**

- 1) The permit shall be valid only for the dates specifically requested and indicated on the issued permit.
- 2) Verification of compliance and inspection by the Fire Department shall be required PRIOR to use;
- 3) All required exits shall be available and kept clear.
- 4) Fire extinguishers must be kept in place and operable.
- 5) Fire resistance label is displayed.
- 6) No combustibles or heating/cooking devices within the tent, unless specifically requested, approved and permitted.
- 7) Additional inspections based upon the use and hazards.