



FIRE RESCUE

ALBEMARLE COUNTY



460 Stagecoach Road, Suite F Charlottesville, VA 22902-6489
Voice: 434-296-5833 FAX: 434-972-4123

www.ACFireRescue.org

TEMPORARY TENTS & MEMBRANE STRUCTURES CODE COMPLIANCE GUIDELINES

I. FIRE RESCUE PERMIT PROCESS

1. Permits are required according to the Virginia Statewide Fire Prevention Code
2. Submit a complete tent permit application including a site plan of the event, interior layout of the tent, and flame-resistant certification online [here](#).
3. When selecting your requested date for inspection, we suggest a representative from the tent company be on site for the inspection/permit issuance.
4. Fees are based on the following:
 - a. \$100 if the complete application is received 30+ days before the event.
 - b. \$150 if the complete application is received 15-29 days before the event.
 - c. \$200 if the complete application is received 8-15 days before the event.
 - d. \$300 if the complete application is received 7 days or less before the event.
5. Permit payments may be made online [here](#).

II. OTHER LOCAL GOVERNMENT PERMITS

Please be aware you may also need to contact the following department regarding your tent/membrane structure.

- If your tent/membrane structure is for a public event, you may need a Zoning Permit.
- If your tent/membrane structure exceeds 900 square feet or over 50 occupants, you need a Building Permit. Contact:
County of Albemarle
Department of Community Development
401 McIntire Road
Charlottesville, Virginia 22902-4596
Voice: 434.296.5832
Web: www.albemarle.org/communitydevelopment

III. SITE PLAN & LAYOUT REQUIREMENTS

All plans shall use an acceptable scale such as 1:10 (1-inch equals 10 feet).

- Site Plan - Site/Location plan shall clearly show the following on each drawing:
 - Location name and address where tent is to be erected.
 - Date(s) of event.
 - Size of the tent (length in feet by width in feet). If multiple tents are used, all tents must be shown, including the firebreak distance between tents.
 - Membrane structures having an area of 15,000 square feet (1394 m²) or more shall be located not less than 50 feet (15 240 mm) from any other tent or structure as measured from the sidewall of the tent or membrane structure unless joined together by a corridor.
 - Number of guests, wait staff, and any other persons (e.g., DJ).
- Layout Plan - Tent plan shall clearly show the following on each drawing:
 - Scaled layout of tables & seats, with proper size of tables and seats shown around the tables. Allow 19" radius from the perimeter edge of the tables for seats, 36" clearance between the fabric sides of the tent and all contents within the tent, and a minimum of 12" between chair-backs placed back-to-back. If standing only (no seats), then state such on the plan. If a dance floor, stage, or platform is used show these items on the plan.

" We will provide the highest quality services to protect and preserve the lives, property, and environment of our community."

- Scaled layout of aisles. Aisles shall not be less than 44” wide and shall be maintained at all times. All aisles shall lead to designated exits with exit signs. See table below for requirements regarding the minimum number of exits required based upon occupancy load.
- An “EXIT” sign installed above all designated exits. If there are sides on the tent, or use is at night, the exit signs shall be illuminated and shall also have emergency white lights.
- The location of any walls attached to the tent.
- The location and type of any approved heating, air-conditioning, and/or electrical equipment being used.
- The location of at least two (2) fire extinguishers. Minimum size: 2A10BC.
- The location of not less than four (4) “NO SMOKING” signs.

| OCCUPANT LOAD | MINIMUM NUMBER OF MEANS OF EGRESS | MINIMUM WIDTH OF EACH MEANS OF EGRESS (inches) | MINIMUM WIDTH OF EACH MEANS OF EGRESS (inches) |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|--|
| | | Tent | Membrane Structure |
| 10 to 199 | 2 | 72 | 36 |
| 200 to 499 | 3 | 72 | 72 |
| 500 to 999 | 4 | 96 | 72 |
| 1,000 to 1,999 | 5 | 120 | 96 |
| 2,000 to 2,999 | 6 | 120 | 96 |
| Over 3,000 ^a | 7 | 120 | 96 |

- Flame Resistance Certificate(s)
 - A flame resistance certificate shall be submitted for each tent/membrane structure and have the following clearly identified on each certificate:
 - Manufacturer/Applicator
 - Certification number
 - Tent/canopy fabric, size, and number of sections
- Requests for Approval of Use of Open Flames, including Candles, Devices Emitting Fire, Flame or Heat, any Flammable or Combustible Liquid, Gas, Charcoal, or Other Cooking Devices (including warming trays)
 - A general permit application shall be submitted for the use of open flames, candles, devices emitting fire/flame/heat, any flammable/combustible liquid/gas/charcoal, or other cooking devices, including warming trays.
 - Include any manufacturer’s documentation, pictures, and/or samples.
 - The location of these activities shall be clearly noted on the plans. They shall not be permitted inside of or within 20’ of the guest tent(s) without permit approval.
 - A class K rated portable fire extinguisher shall be installed no more than 30’ from any cooking equipment using animal or vegetable oils and/or fats.
 - Combustible vegetation and/or waste materials shall be removed from the area occupied by the tent.
 - Combustible and/or decorative material shall not be hung from the underside of the tent.