



**COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
FIRE DEPARTMENT
FIRE PREVENTION DIVISION**

TEMPORARY MEMBRANE STRUCTURE/ TENT PERMIT REQUIREMENTS

Section 105.6.43 of the Los Angeles County Fire Code states that permits required by the Fire Code shall be obtained from the fire code official. Temporary membrane structures and tents. An **operational permit** is required to operate an air supported temporary membrane structure or a tent having an area in excess of 400 square feet (37 m²).

Exceptions:

1. Tents used exclusively for recreational camping purposes.
2. Tents open on all sides, which comply with all of the following:
 - 2.1. Individual tents having a maximum size of 700 square feet (65 m²).
 - 2.2. The aggregate area of multiple tents placed side by side without a fire break clearance of not less than 12 feet (3658 mm) shall not exceed 700 square feet (65m²) total.
 - 2.3. A minimum clearance of 12 feet (3658 mm) to structures and other tents shall be provided.

Section 105.7.16 states that a **construction permit** is required to erect an air-supported temporary membrane structure or a tent having an area in excess of 400 square feet (37 m²).

Exceptions:

1. Tents used exclusively for recreational camping purposes.
2. Funeral tents and curtains, or extensions attached thereto, when used for funeral services.
3. Tents and awnings open on all sides, which comply with all of the following:
 - 3.1. Individual tents shall have a maximum size of 700 square feet (65 m²).
 - 3.2. The aggregate area of multiple tents placed side by side without a fire break clearance of not less than 12 feet (3658 mm) shall not exceed 700 square feet (65m²) total.
 - 3.3. A minimum clearance of 12 feet (3658mm) to structures and other tents shall be maintained.

General. Tents and membrane structures shall comply with chapter 31. The provisions of Section 3103 are applicable only to temporary tents and membrane structures. The provisions of Section 3104 are applicable to temporary and permanent tents and membrane structures. (3101.1)

Approval required. Tents and membrane structures having an area in excess of 400 square feet (37 m²) shall not be erected, operated or maintained for any purpose without first obtaining a permit and approval from the fire code official.

Exceptions:

1. Tents used exclusively for recreational camping purposes.
2. Tents open on all sides which comply with all of the following:
 - 2.1. Individual tents having a maximum size of 700 square feet (65 m²).
 - 2.2. The aggregate area of multiple tents placed side by side without a fire break clearance of 12 feet (3658 mm), not exceeding 700 squarefeet (65 m²) total.

2.3. A minimum clearance of 12 feet (3658 mm) to all structures and other tents. (3103.2)

Use period. Temporary tents, air-supported, air-inflated or tensioned membrane structures and canopies shall not be erected for a period of more than 180 days within a 12-month period on a single premises. (3103.5)

Construction documents. A detailed site and floor plan for tents, canopies or membrane structures with an occupant load of 50 or more shall be provided with each application for approval. The tent, canopy or membrane structure floor plan shall indicate details of the means of egress facilities, seating capacity, arrangement of the seating and location and type of heating and electrical equipment. (3103.6)

Inspections. The entire tent, air-supported, air inflated or tensioned membrane structure system shall be inspected at regular intervals, but not less than two times per permit use period, by the permittee, owner or agent to determine that the installation is maintained in accordance with this chapter. Exception: Permit use periods of less than 30 days. (3103.7)

Access. Fire apparatus access roads shall be provided in accordance with Section 503. (3103.8.1)

Location. Tents or membrane structures shall not be located within 20 feet (6096 mm) of lot lines, buildings, other tents or membrane structures, parked vehicles or internal combustion engines. For the purpose of determining required distances, support ropes and guy wires shall be considered as part of the temporary membrane structure or tent.

Exceptions:

1. Separation distance between membrane structures and tents not used for cooking is not required when the aggregate floor area does not exceed 15,000 square feet (1394 m²).
2. Membrane structures or tents need not be separated from buildings when all of the following conditions are met:
 - 2.1. The aggregate floor area of the membrane structure or tent shall not exceed 10,000 square feet (929 m²).
 - 2.2. The aggregate floor area of the building and membrane structure or tent shall not exceed the allowable floor area including increases as indicated in the California Building Code,
 - 2.3. Required means of egress are provided for both the building and the membrane structure or tent including travel distances.
 - 2.4. Fire apparatus access roads are provided in accordance with Section 503.
3. When approved by the enforcing agency, tents may be located in or on permanent buildings provided such use does not constitute an undue hazard. (3103.8.2)

Anchorage required. Tents, canopies or membrane structures and their appurtenances shall be adequately roped, braced and anchored to withstand the elements of weather and prevent against collapsing. Documentation of structural stability shall be furnished to the fire code official on request. (3103.9)

Means of egress. Means of egress for temporary tents and membrane structures shall be in accordance with Sections 3103.12.1 through 3103.12.8. (3103.12)

Distribution. Exits shall be spaced at approximately equal intervals around the perimeter of the tent or membrane structure, and shall be located such that all points are 100 feet (30 480 mm) or less from an exit. (3103.12.1)

Number. Tents, or membrane structures or a usable portion thereof shall have at least one exit and not less than the number of exits required by Table 3103.12.2. The total width of

means of egress in inches (mm) shall not be less than the total occupant load served by a means of egress multiplied by 0.2 inches (5 mm) per person. (3103.12.2)

Exit openings from tents. Exit openings from tents shall remain open unless covered by a flame-resistant curtain. The curtain shall comply with the following requirements:

1. Curtains shall be free sliding on a metal support. The support shall be a minimum of 80 inches (2032 mm) above the floor level at the exit. The curtains shall be so arranged that, when open, no part of the curtain obstructs the exit.
2. Curtains shall be of a color, or colors, that contrasts with the color of the tent.(3103.12.3)

Exit openings from tents. Exit openings from tents shall remain open unless covered by a flame-resistant curtain. The curtain shall comply with the following requirements:

1. Curtains shall be free sliding on a metal support. The support shall be a minimum of 80 inches (2032 mm) above the floor level at the exit. The curtains shall be so arranged that, when open, no part of the curtain obstructs the exit.
2. Curtains shall be of a color, or colors, that contrasts with the color of the tent.(3103.12.3)

Exit signs. Exits shall be clearly marked. Exit signs shall be installed at required exit doorways and where otherwise necessary to indicate clearly the direction of egress when the exit serves an occupant load of 50 or more. (3103.12.6)

Exit sign illumination. Exit signs shall be either listed and labeled in accordance with UL 924 as the internally illuminated type and used in accordance with the listing or shall be externally illuminated by luminaires supplied in the following manner:

1. Two separate circuits, one of which shall be separate from all other circuits, for occupant loads of 300 or less; or
2. Two separate sources of power, one of which shall be an approved emergency system, shall be provided when the occupant load exceeds 300. Emergency systems shall be supplied from storage batteries or from the on-site generator set, and the system shall be installed in accordance with the California Electrical Code. The emergency system provided shall have a minimum duration of 90 minutes when operated at full design demand. (3103.12.6.1)

Flame propagation performance treatment. Flame propagation performance treatment. Before a permit is granted, the owner or agent shall file with the fire code official a certificate executed by an approved testing laboratory certifying that the tents and membrane structures and their appurtenances; sidewalls, drops and tarpaulins; floor coverings, bunting and combustible decorative materials and effects, including sawdust when used on floors or passageways, are *flame resistant in accordance with appropriate standards set forth in CCR, Title 19, Division 1, Chapter 8. Tops and sidewalls shall be made either from fabric which has been flame resistant treated with an approved exterior chemical process by an approved application concern, or from inherently flame-resistant fabric approved and listed by the State Fire Marshal (see CCR, Title 19, Division 1, Chapter 8).* (3104.2)

Label. Membrane structures or tents shall have a permanently affixed label bearing the identification of size and fabric or material type. See CCR Title 19 requirements (3104.3)

Smoking. Smoking shall not be permitted in tents, canopies or membrane structures. Approved "No Smoking" signs shall be conspicuously posted in accordance with Section 310. (3104.6)

Open or exposed flame. Open flame or other devices emitting flame, fire or heat or any flammable or combustible liquids, gas, charcoal or other cooking device or any other unapproved devices shall not be permitted inside or located within 20 feet (6096 mm) of the tent, canopy or membrane structures while open to the public unless approved by the fire code official. (3104.7)

Fireworks. Fireworks shall not be used within 100 feet (30 480 mm) of tents, canopies or membrane structures. (3104.8)

Clearance. There shall be a minimum clearance of at least 3 feet (914 mm) between the fabric envelope and all contents located inside the tent or membrane structure. (3104.11)

Portable fire extinguishers. Portable fire extinguishers shall be provided as required by California Code of Regulations, Title 19, Division 1, Chapter 2, Article 3, Section 319. (3104.12)

Heating and cooking equipment. Heating and cooking equipment shall be in accordance with Sections 3104.15.1 through 3104.15.7. (3104.15)

Display of motor vehicles. Liquid- and gas-fueled vehicles and equipment used for display within tents, canopies or membrane structures shall be in accordance with Sections 3104.18.1 through 3104.18.5.3. (3104.18)

Separation of generators. Generators and other internal combustion power sources shall be separated from tents, canopies or membrane structures by a minimum of 20 feet (6096 mm) and shall be isolated from contact with the public by fencing, enclosure or other approved means. (3104.19)

The information above states general Fire Code permit requirements. Additional specific requirements may be set by the fire code official after reviewing the application for a permit and subsequent field inspection. Application for a permit required by the Fire Code should include enough detail information such as a statement, plot plan, drawings, photos, lists, technical specifications, and applicable approval from other agencies in order to show compliance with Fire Code requirements.

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