



Fire Marshal Requirements for Tents During COVID-19 Recovery

All tent applications should be submitted by e-mail to the Development Services Counter at Permits@FallsChurchVA.Gov. The Fire Marshal will work with the Building Safety Department for approving the tent(s)

All tents and membrane structures require a permit for erecting and maintaining during the recovery process. All fire and building safety requirements for tent installations must be followed.

Existing fire-protection features for the area cannot be compromised. This includes blocking fire hydrants, blocking fire lanes, blocking egress from building exits, blocking access to Fire Department Connections, or any other fire or building safety code.

Tent size may be no more than 30 X 30 feet. Additional sizes will be approved on case-by-case basis. This will allow for greater ventilation, especially if the weather is hot and humid with little airflow. Currently, the Virginia Department of Health does not have any regulations for air circulation within tents. The larger the tent, the greater possibility of air being contaminated with the virus in the middle of the tent. Tents will be open sided to allow for better air circulation. No cooking is allowed in tents erected for the COVID-19 Recovery.

Occupancy load during the Recovery process will be at 50% of an allowable assembly area, which is 15 square feet/person. **Reducing to 50% will allow 30 square feet/per person; 30 people total for a 30 x 30 tent.** This is based on the Phase 1 requirements from the Governor.

An electrical permit is required through the Building Safety division for electrical wiring for lighting, and for generators to power the lights. Electrical wiring needs to be installed correctly to prevent injury or death. **Battery operated and solar lighting are permissible without permit.** Heaters for tents must have an additional permit prior to installation and use. Please note in your application if you will require electrical or heat.

Aisle space must be maintained to allow for occupants to exit the tent unobstructed. Exits shall be clearly marked. Determining the best layout with tables and chairs will be the responsibility of the applicant. ADA requirements shall be maintained.

All distancing rules will apply based on the Governors orders for restaurants, dining establishments, food courts, breweries, microbreweries, distilleries, wineries, and tasting rooms.

- a. Occupancy may not exceed 50% of the lowest occupancy load on the certificate of occupancy, if applicable.
- b. No more than 10 patrons may be seated as a party.
- c. Tables at which dining parties are seated must be positioned six feet apart from other tables. If tables are not movable, parties must be seated at least six feet apart.
- d. No self-service of food (except beverages), including condiments. Condiments should be removed from tables and dispensed by employees upon the request of a customer. Buffets must be staffed by servers. For self-service beverage areas, use beverage equipment designed to dispense by a contamination-free method.

- e. Bar seats and congregating areas of restaurants must be closed to patrons except for through-traffic. Non-bar seating in an outdoor bar area may be used for customer seating as long as a minimum of six feet is provided between parties at tables.
- f. Employees working in customer-facing areas must wear face coverings over their nose and mouth at all times.
- g. A thorough cleaning and disinfection of frequently contacted surfaces must be conducted every 60 minutes during operation. Tabletops, chairs, and credit card/bill folders must be cleaned in between patrons.
- h. If any such business cannot adhere to these requirements, it must close.

Tents must be flame resistant and have an approved label attached showing proof of flame resistance along with a copy of the flame resistance certification. *This must be submitted with the application.*

Tents must be anchored with adequate weights depending on the size of the tent. A 10' X 10' tent must have at least 20 pounds of weight per leg. We recommend 40 pounds per leg. The vendor must follow recommended guidelines from the tent manufacturer for specific weight requirements.

Open-sided tents shall not be located within 12 feet of structures, other tents, lot lines, parked vehicles, or internal combustion engines.

Smoking is prohibited under all tents and approved 'No Smoking' signs shall be posted.

The following are not permitted within twenty feet the tent:

- a. Open flames
- b. Any cooking device
- c. Any device emitting flame, fire, or heat
- d. Any flammable or combustible liquid, gas, or charcoal

Combustible vegetation and waste material shall be removed from the area occupied by a tent or membrane structure, and from within 30 feet of such structures.

A minimum of one 2-A rated portable fire extinguisher shall be provided for smaller tents, mounted with the bottom at least 4" above ground level but the top no more than 60" above ground level. Two extinguishers will be required for 30' x 30' tent.

These are general requirements under the Fire Code, additional requirements under the Fire Code as well as other Codes may apply depending on the circumstances. Questions regarding the procedures and clarification may be directed to the City of Falls Church Fire Marshal at FireMarshal@FallsChurchVA.Gov or calling 703-248-5058 (TTY 711).

All applications must be accompanied by a property layout showing the location of the tents, a letter from the property owner or landlord granting permission for the tent, a layout of the tent interior including exit locations, and the flame-retardant certification. If there will be electrical or heat in the tent, it must be shown as well.



The City of Falls Church is committed to the letter and spirit of the Americans with Disabilities Act. This document will be made available in alternate format upon request. Call 703-248-5058 (TTY 711).



Community Planning & Economic Development Services

Building Safety Division
 300 Park Avenue, Suite 103E, Falls Church, VA 22046
 Phone: 703-248-5080 (TTY 711) Fax: 703-248-5214
 permits@fallschurchva.gov www.fallschurchva.gov

TEMPORARY TENT APPLICATION

PERMIT NO. _____

ADDRESS WHERE TENT WILL BE LOCATED

Street Address _____ **Falls Church, VA** Zip Code _____

APPLICANT/RESPONSIBLE PARTY

COMPANY PROVIDING TENT

Name			Phone <input type="checkbox"/> H <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> C		
Address			Address		
City	State	Zip Code	City	State	Zip Code

REQUIREMENTS

Please read over this application and instructions thoroughly. Fill out the application completely and submit it with all required attachments. Application must be made at least 10 business days prior to the event.

- Application must include:**
- Property-owner permission letter
 - Overall Site Plan
 - Fire Retardant Certification (each tent)
 - If there will be lighting or other electrical use, full plans showing lights and how the electrical will be handled
 - Floor Plan with Exits
 - Payment of the fee: \$85.00 per tent

Please Note: This permit is required for all tents exceeding 400 square feet. Exception: Tents may be up to 700 s.f. without a permit if they are open on all sides and at least 12 feet from any other tent or structure.

EVENT INFORMATION

Event Date: _____	Event Time: _____	Description of Event: _____
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TENT INFORMATION

Tent Size	Qty	Vendor	Vendor Phone
1.			
2.			
3.			

SIGNATURE

Check Policy - The City of Falls Church accepts checks as a form of payment. However, should your check be returned to us for any reason, it is our policy to electronically debit your account for the amount of the check plus a processing fee of \$50.00.

I hereby certify the proposed work is authorized by the property owner and I have been authorized by all involved parties to make this application. I hereby accept full responsibility for the adherence to all requirements of the Virginia Statewide Fire Prevention Code and the City of Falls Church Fire Prevention Code pertaining to the above application. I have read and understand the information on the City handout *Fire Marshal Requirements for Tents*.

Signature of Applicant _____	Date _____	Address _____
Print Name _____	Phone Number _____	City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____
E-Mail Address for Issued Permit (required) _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Phone <input type="checkbox"/> e-mail <input type="checkbox"/> Postal mail Preferred method of contact for questions/when ready	

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OFFICIAL USE ONLY

<p>Permit Technician: Set this up in Munis as project type "CTEN". Routed to Fire Marshal and Building Safety.</p>	<p>Tent Application Approved</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Henry Lane, City Fire Marshal</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Date</p>
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City of Falls Church Fire Marshal
300 Park Avenue, Falls Church, VA 22046
Phone: 703-248-5058 (TTY 711) Fax: 703-248-5158
firemarshal@fallschurchva.gov www.fallschurchva.gov



FIRE MARSHAL REQUIREMENTS FOR TENTS

Tents and membrane structures having an area in excess of 400 square feet shall not be erected, operated or maintained without a permit. Exceptions: Tents exclusively for recreational camping and tents open on ALL sides, provided they are no larger than 700 square feet with less than 50 persons. Tents in excess of 900 square feet for temporary use *must* have a building permit.

Tents must be flame resistant and have an approved label attached showing proof of flame resistance along with a copy of the flame resistance certification. *This must be submitted with the application.*

Tents used for assembly purposes with occupancy over 50 people shall be required to have exit and emergency lighting. Emergency lighting must also be provided for tents used after sundown. Tents with sides must have clearly marked exits. Side panels covering exits should be of a contrasting color and mounted so that they slide open to clear the exit. Signs must be illuminated if tent is used after sundown.

Tents shall not be located within 20 feet of lot lines, buildings, parked vehicles, internal combustion engines, or other tents and membrane structures.

Smoking is prohibited under all tents and approved 'No Smoking' signs shall be posted.

Open flames or any devices emitting flame, fire or heat or any flammable or combustible liquid, gas, charcoal or other cooking device shall not be permitted or located within 20 feet of any tent while open to the public.

Propane cylinders shall be located outside of tents and be at least 10 feet from any tent opening. Safety relief valves shall be pointed away from tent or membrane structure.

Tent applications shall include details on the location and type of any heating and electrical equipment. An electrical permit may be required for certain lighting and fixtures.

Generators must be at least 20 feet away and isolated from contact with the general public. Flammable and combustible liquids must be stored at least 50 feet from the tent, canopy or membrane structure. Generators must be located to prevent carbon monoxide emissions into tents.

Combustible vegetation and waste material shall be removed from the area occupied by a tent or membrane structure, and within 30 feet of such structures.

A minimum of two 2-A rated portable fire extinguishers shall be provided, mounted with the bottom at least 4" above ground level but the top no more than 60" above ground level.

This are general requirements under the Fire Code, additional requirements under the Fire Code as well as other Codes may apply depending on the circumstances. Questions regarding the procedures and clarification may be directed to the City of Falls Church Fire Marshal using the contact information at the top of this page.

Tents are subject to inspection by Building or Fire Official.

During the declared state of emergency for coronavirus, some of these provisions have been modified. Please see the separate handout from the Fire Marshal for full details.