



Southborough Fire Department

Fire Prevention & Code Enforcement Office

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FIRE CODE REQUIREMENTS for OUTDOOR EVENT TENTS, COOKING & GENERATORS

The following requirements are enforced under the Massachusetts Comprehensive Fire Safety Code (527 CMR 1.00), Massachusetts General Law Chapter 148 (MGL 148) and the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). Some requirements overlap with the Massachusetts (527 CMR 780) & International Building Codes. In such overlap the Building Codes will supersede the Fire Codes, except where specifically noted and/or as determined jointly between the Authorities Having Jurisdiction (Fire Chief & Building Commissioner)

1. The type of event and/or number of attendees may require additional requirements under the laws/regulations specific to the tent's "use group": Night Club, Assembly or other Use Groups
2. Material and Construction:
 - a. Tent material must be constructed of flame resistant material/fabric with a tag noting such on all sections/parts. The rating must be certified as such by a nationally recognized/approved agency/laboratory
3. No open-flame is allowed within /under any tent, including smoking materials and candles
4. The use of pyrotechnics, theatrical smoke or theatrical type color powders are prohibited within /under any tent or within the setback distances set forth in specific codes
5. Cooking:
 - a. Cooking of any type and by any method must be done outside tents or within a flame rated and approved separate tent.
 - b. All cooking equipment and any dedicated cooking tent(s) must be separated from all (other) tents by no less than 10-feet.
 - c. Appropriate type, size and quantity of fire extinguishers must be present at all cooking equipment.
 - i. All staff/cooks must know how to operate specific fire extinguishers
6. Flammable or Combustible Fuels & Materials:
 - a. A separate permit & inspection is required through the fire department for the use of propane, natural gas, gasoline, diesel, etc. to power any equipment; including Cooking equipment, Heating and Cooling units and Generators.
 - b. Refueling any units is prohibited on-site during an event and/or when attendees are present
 - c. Fuel cans & tanks must be staged at least 5-feet from equipment/units
 - d. Wood or Coal for fired equipment, including pizza ovens, must be stored at least 5-feet from the unit.
 - e. Any unit that releases hazardous exhaust (Carbon Monoxide) shall not be used within or under a tent and shall be placed up-wind attendee's and staff
 - f. Carbon Monoxide detectors must be installed within/under all tents

7. Generators:

- a. Wattage/Amperage must be rated for what is being powered
- b. Properly Grounded and/or be GCFI rated/equipped
- c. Must be located on:
 - i. Flat, solid, non-combustible ground
 - ii. No less than 10-feet from any building/structure/vehicle/trailer/tents, unless specifically designed and installed to be mounted on a vehicle/trailer
 - iii. No less than 5 feet from any air intake vents
 - iv. No less than 10 feet from public areas, such as serving counters and amusements
 - v. No less than 10 feet from flammable materials, including gasoline
 - vi. No less than 3 feet from combustible materials, including dry vegetation/grass
- d. A correct type/size fire extinguisher must be visible within 25ft
- e. Must have some type of barrier (snow fence, caution tape, etc.) surrounding units to protect attendees and staff from accidental injury.

8. Extension Cords:

- a. Must be rated and designed for outdoor use by Underwriters Laboratory (UL)
- b. Wattage/Amperage must be rated for what is being powered
- c. Must not present a tip hazard