



WOODSIDE FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

Special Events/Tents Guidelines and Standards

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SCOPE: This guideline applies to all carnivals, fairs, trade shows, and public events, including both annual and short-term weekend occurrences. It is designed to be used in conjunction with the **2025 California Fire Code** and **Title 19**, though it does not exhaustively list every regulation. All installations and operations shall remain in strict compliance with all applicable current fire and life safety codes.

A special event is defined as a temporary gathering of 50 or more participants involving one or more of the following activities:

1. Exclusive use of public facilities such as buildings, parks, streets, parking lots, athletic fields, etc.
2. Use of private property where temporary structures (stages, tents, canopies), and/or demonstration areas, activity participation areas are utilized by the public.
3. Closing of a public street or private right-of-way.
4. Requires temporary installation of equipment and/or buildings.
5. Requires public safety support based upon Fire Department assessment.

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. **Vehicle Protection.** At locations where normal city streets are closed off for an event or at any other location that may be adjacent to normal vehicle traffic, it is highly suggested that K-Rail type vehicle protection be placed between the event and vehicle traffic.
2. **Emergency Vehicle Access.** The layout of the event and/or midway shall provide a minimum 20-foot clearance between rows of booths, exhibits, or any other types of displays or structures that are part of the event for emergency vehicle access. A clear space of not less than 15 feet shall be maintained to provide access to fire hydrants both inside and outside the event.
3. **Electrical Equipment.** Electrical equipment and installations shall comply with the California Electric Code.

4. **Internal Combustion Power Sources.** Fuel tanks shall be of adequate capacity to permit uninterrupted operation during normal operating hours. Refueling shall be conducted only when the ride or appliance is not in use. Internal combustion power sources shall be isolated from the public.
5. **Fire Extinguishers.** Fire extinguishers shall be provided and meet the following requirements:
 - a. Portable fire extinguishers shall be located every 150 feet, with no more than 75 feet travel distance to a fire extinguisher. Depending on the distribution of cooking booths, exhibits, or the carnival midway, fire extinguishers provided in cooking areas may be used to meet this requirement. Internal combustion power sources, cooking booths, and cooking exhibits shall all have their own fire extinguishers.
 - b. Fire extinguishers shall be mounted adjacent to the exit from booths or exhibits and secured so that they will not fall over. Fire extinguishers must be visible and accessible.
 - c. Extinguishers shall be a minimum 2A10BC rated. Each cooking booth or cooking exhibit using deep fat cooking oil shall be provided with at least one Type K fire extinguisher.
 - d. Fire extinguishers shall have been serviced within the last year and be provided with an attached service tag.
6. **Waste Accumulation.** Combustible waste materials shall be removed regularly throughout the event.
7. **Compressed Gases.** Compressed gas cylinders shall be secured in an upright position and away from cooking operations, rides, or any other operations that may damage the cylinder or expose cylinders to excessive heat.
8. **Decorative Materials.** All decorative materials used for the event shall be inherently fire resistive or may be treated by the owner with a State Fire Marshal approved fire retardant chemical (empty can and dated sales receipt may serve as proof).
9. **Booths or Exhibits.** Booths or exhibits shall be adequately roped, braced, and anchored in order to uphold during any weather conditions. They shall be located a minimum of 10 ft. from any permanent structure. Vehicles required for the operation of the event shall be parked a minimum of 20 ft.
10. **Tents, Canopies and Temporary Membrane Structures.** Tents and air supported temporary membrane structures in excess of 400 square feet require additional safety measures as specified by the California Fire Code. This includes the aggregate area of multiple tents placed side by side without a fire break clearance of 12 feet and exceed 700 square feet total.

PERMIT APPLICATION

1. Application and associated fees should be submitted at least 30 days prior to the scheduled event. **Failure to provide the required information to the Woodside Fire Protection District 15 days prior to the event will result in double fees and may result in delaying the start of your event.**
2. A site inspection shall be scheduled to take place within 48 hours prior to the event.
3. For questions or for more information, call 650-851-1594 or email wfpdplanreview@woodsidefire.org.
4. Go to <https://aca-prod.accela.com/WFPD> to apply for a special event permit. Special event permits include:
 - a. Campfire Permit (Event Permit)
 - b. Event Permit (Block Party, Street Fair, Outdoor Event with 1,000 people or more at one time, Festivals)
 - c. Tent Permits
 - i. A tent more than 400 square feet with sides
 - ii. A tent without sides more than 700 square feet. (or aggregate area of multiple tents placed side by side shall not exceed 700 sq feet without a 12 foot fire break). Tents shall be a minimum of 12 feet away from all structures and other tents.
 - d. Assembly events with two or more cooking booths.
 - e. Assembly events with four or more mobile food facilities.
 - f. Fireworks public display or pyrotechnic special effects.
5. The following documents are required with your Public Event submittal:
 - g. Location of event access points.
 - h. Location of on-site event staff.
 - i. First aid stations (if provided).
 - j. Road closure points and K-Rail placement.
 - k. Fire lane and fire hydrant locations.
 - l. Location of vending booths.

- m. Locations of food service booths and/or food trucks.
 - n. Locations of power sources.
 - o. Location of portable fire extinguishers.
 - p. Location of tents or membrane structures.
 - q. Provide a name and telephone number for the event promoter.
6. The following documents are required with your Tent Installation submittal:
- r. Site plan which includes the location of all tents or membrane structures.
 - s. Certificate of flame resistance for all fabrics used.
 - t. Certificate of liability.
 - u. Anchoring schematic.

IMPORTANT: The event coordinator is required to coordinate with the tent supplier when the interior configuration is set up. Do not schedule a site inspection if the interior setup will not be ready at that time. Additionally, emergency backup power for exit lights must be operational. The site inspection includes the entire site, not just the tent(s). Non-conformance of life safety plan review comments at the time of inspection may require a re-inspection and additional fees.

PUBLIC SAFETY FOR EVENTS (when applicable):

- 1) **Fire Watch Personnel.** When, in the opinion of the official fire code, it is essential for public safety in a place of assembly or any other place where people congregate because of the number of persons or the nature of the performance, exhibition, display, contest or activity, the owner, agent, or lessee shall provide one or more fire watch personnel, as required, and approved. *CFC 403.11.1*
 - a. **Duties.** On-duty fire watch personnel shall have the following responsibilities, *CFC 403.11.1.2*:
 - i. Keep diligent watch for fires, obstructions to means of egress and other hazards.
 - ii. Take prompt measures for remediation of hazards and extinguishment of fires that occur.
 - iii. Take prompt measures to assist in the evacuation of the public from the structures.
- 2) **Public safety plan for gatherings.** Where the fire code official determines that an indoor or outdoor gathering of persons has an adverse impact on public safety through diminished access to buildings, structures, fire hydrants and fire apparatus

access roads or where such gatherings adversely affect public safety services of any kind, the fire code official shall have the authority to order the development of or prescribe a public safety plan that provides an approved level of public safety and addresses the following items, *CFC 403.11.2*:

- a. Emergency vehicle ingress and egress.
- b. Fire protection.
- c. Emergency egress or escape routes.
- d. Emergency medical services.
- e. Public assembly services.
- f. The directing of both attendees and vehicles, including the parking of vehicles.
- g. Vendor and food concession distribution.
- h. The need for the presence of law enforcement.
- i. The need for fire and emergency medical services personnel.
- j. The need for a weather monitoring person.

MORE THAN 500 ATTENDEES THE FOLLOWING ADDITIONAL ITEMS APPLY

Crowd Managers. Trained crowd managers shall be provided for events where more than 500 people are expected to congregate. The minimum number of crowd managers shall be established at a ratio of one crowd manager to every 250 persons. *CFC 403.11.3.1*

To maintain public safety, all designated personnel must successfully complete the specific crowd dynamics and hazard identification training available at **CrowdManagers.com**. Applicants are required to print their official certificate of completion and include it as a mandatory attachment at the time of permit or application submittal. Failure to provide this physical proof of certification will result in the application being deemed incomplete and ineligible for processing.

Fire Evacuation Plans. Fire evacuation plans shall be in accordance with the following:

1. Emergency egress or escape routes and whether evacuation of the building is to be complete or, where approved, by selected floors or areas only.
2. Procedures for employees who must remain to operate critical equipment before evacuating.
3. Procedures for assisted rescue for people unable to use the general means of egress unassisted.
4. Procedures for accounting for employees and occupants after evacuation have been completed.
5. Identification and assignment of personnel responsible for rescue or emergency medical aid.

6. They preferred and any alternative means of notifying occupants of a fire or emergency.
7. They preferred and any alternative means of reporting fires and other emergencies to the fire department or designated emergency response organization.
8. Identification and assignment of personnel who can be contacted for further information or explanation of duties under the plan.
9. A description of the emergency voice/alarm communication system alert tone and preprogrammed voice messages, where provided.

Fire Safety Plans. Fire safety plans shall include the following:

1. The procedure for reporting a fire or other emergency.
2. The life safety strategy and procedures for notifying, relocating or evacuating occupants, including occupants who need assistance.
3. Site plans indicating the following:
 - a. The occupancy assembly point.
 - b. The locations of fire hydrants.
 - c. The normal routes of fire department vehicle access.
4. Floor plans identifying the locations of the following:
 - a. Exits
 - b. Primary evacuation routes
 - c. Secondary evacuation routes
 - d. Accessible egress routes
 - e. Areas of refuge
 - f. Exterior areas for assisted rescue
 - g. Manual fire alarm boxes
 - h. Portable fire extinguishers
 - i. Occupancy-use hose stations
 - j. Fire alarm annunciators and controls
5. A list of major fire hazards associated with the normal use and occupancy of the premises, including maintenance and housekeeping procedures.
6. Identification and assignment of personnel responsible for maintenance of systems and equipment installed to prevent or control fires.
7. Identification and assignment of personnel responsible for maintenance, housekeeping and controlling fuel hazard sources.

COOKING REQUIREMENTS

Openings in Booths or Exhibits. Booths or exhibits utilized for cooking shall be provided with openings containing a minimum of 30 sq ft each on 2 opposing sides of

the booth/exhibit to prevent the accumulation of carbon monoxide produced by cooking processes.

Separation Distances. Cooking tents with sidewalls or drops where cooking is performed shall be separated from other tents or membrane structures by not less than 20 feet. Mobile food trucks or exhibits shall be separated from non-cooking booths or exhibits by 20 feet and shall not be located within 20 feet of amusement rides, devices, or buildings.

Note: Any outdoor cooking that produces sparks or grease-laden vapors shall not be performed within 20 feet of a tent or membrane structure.

Floor Materials. It is highly suggested that flooring materials used within festival cooking booths/exhibits, and under all equipment, shall be non-combustible or fire retardant treated.

Cooking Surfaces. All cooking surfaces shall be cleaned regularly to reduce accumulations of grease.

Heating and cooking equipment. Heating and cooking equipment shall not be located within 10 feet of exits or combustible materials. Operations such as warming of foods, cooking demonstrations and similar operations that use solid flammables, butane or other similar devices that do not pose an ignition hazard, shall be approved. Woodside Fire District encourages the use of noncombustible materials in booths or exhibits used for cooking purposes.

Cooking Appliances or Devices. All cooking appliances or devices that produce sparks or grease laden vapors or flying embers shall not be used within 20 feet of a tent or temporary structure unless designated as a cooking tent and is not occupied by the public when approved by the fire code official.

Protection. Cooking equipment using combustible oils or solids shall meet the following:

1. A noncombustible lid should be immediately available. The lid shall be of sufficient size to cover the cooking well completely.
2. The equipment shall be placed on a noncombustible surface.
3. An approved portable fire extinguisher for protection from cooking grease fires shall be provided at a location approved by the fire code official.

Portable Stoves. Coleman style stoves or equivalent may be used only with approved fuel and the following requirements:

1. The fueling or refueling of stoves or cooking appliances is prohibited inside booths/exhibits.
2. The storage of fuel in booths/exhibits is prohibited.

3. The use of gasoline or kerosene is prohibited.

Butane and Propane Equipment. Butane and propane equipment shall conform to the following requirements:

1. Fuel tanks for butane and propane cooking appliances shall be limited in size to 10-gallon water capacity.
2. Fuel tanks shall be located outside the booth/exhibit. Tanks are prohibited inside booths/exhibits.
3. Fuel tanks shall be protected from damage and secured in an upright position.
4. Storage of tanks shall not exceed two, 15-gallon water capacity tanks for each cooking appliance.
5. All tanks shall have an approved shut off valve.
6. All appliances shall have a fuel control and shut off valve.
7. Fuel supply shall be shut off at the tank when not in use.
8. Hoses and connections shall be approved for use with the appliance and type of fuel used.
9. All connections shall be tested. Vendors/exhibitors shall provide a spray bottle of soapy water.

Charcoal or Wood Barbecue Cooking. Charcoal/Wood barbecue cooking shall be in accordance with the following requirements:

1. Charcoal/Wood Barbecue cooking is prohibited inside booths/exhibits.
2. Located away from public access. There shall be a minimum 20 ft distance from any booth/exhibit or permanent structure.
3. Only commercially sold charcoal fuel may be used.
4. Only commercially sold charcoal lighter fluid or electric starters may be used. Gasoline and kerosene are prohibited.

Deep Fat Frying and Flambé Cooking. Deep Fat Fry/Flambé Cooking shall be in accordance with the following requirements:

1. The cooking area shall not be accessible to the public.
2. Deep Fat/Flambé Cooking operations shall be located outside booths, exhibits and tents and shall be no closer than 18 inches from combustible materials.
3. A minimum 18-inch clearance shall be provided between deep fat frying appliances/woks and open flame stoves.

GENERATORS

Location. Generators shall be installed not less than 10 feet from combustible materials, 20 feet from tents or membrane structures, and shall be isolated from the public by physical guard, fence or enclosure installed not less than 3 feet away from the internal combustion power source.

Portable Fire Extinguishers. Each generator shall be provided with an approved portable fire extinguisher, minimum 10 B-C.