

**Permit Requirements  
Tent Permits**

**Kern County Fire Department**



Office of the Fire Marshal ~ Fire Prevention  
2820 M St. ~ Bakersfield, CA 93301  
Telephone (661) 391-3310 ~ Fax (661) 636-0466/67  
**Website:** kerncountyfire.org  
**Email:** fireprevention@kerncountyfire.org



Please include completed Application for Permit (KCFD 200) with submittal

**Fee Amounts:**

**Excess of 400 sq. ft. but less than 2,001 sq. ft. - \$135.00, Fee Code: 1.15**

**Excess of 2,000 sq. ft. - \$215.00, Fee Code 1.10**

**All tents, canopies, and membrane structures SHALL comply with Chapter 31 of the California Fire Code (CFC) 2019 Edition.**

1. Permits must be applied for at 2820 M St., Bakersfield, CA 93301.
2. Fee shall be submitted at time of application submittal. Make check payable to Kern County Fire Department. **Visa and MasterCard accepted.**
3. Tents and membrane structures having an area of 400 square feet or more shall not be erected, operated or maintained for any purpose without first obtaining a permit and approval from the fire code official.  
**Exceptions:** Tents used exclusively for recreational camping purposes & residential uses only.
4. Structures shall not be erected for a period of more than 180 days within a 12 month period on a single premise. (2019 CFC 3103.5)
5. A detailed site and floor plan for occupancy loads of 50 or greater will be included with the application. It shall include the following details:
  - a. Egress facilities including the locations of exits, exit aisles, and exit signs illuminated with battery power backups (CFC 3103.12.)
  - b. Seating details including capacity, arrangement, and locations (CFC 3103.11)
  - c. Location and types of heating and cooking equipment (CFC 3107.12)
  - d. Separation of generators (CFC 3107.16)
  - e. Fire lanes
  - f. Hydrants (include cap color if possible)
  - g. Concession stand locations
  - h. Provided extinguishers
  - i. Parking locations
6. A copy of the certification for the flame propagation performance treatment shall be included in the application.
7. A copy of the tent requirements and plans to the business owners.
8. The application must be submitted at least **48 hours prior** to the Fire Safety Inspection. The Fire Safety Inspection must be completed and approved prior to opening to the public **(no application for permit with inspection time after 3:00 p.m. on Fridays).**

*The following requirements shall be followed for the duration of the permit:*

**Access, Location, and Parking (CFC 3103.8)**

- a. Access, location, and parking for temporary tents and membrane structures shall be in accordance with this section.

**Access (CFC 3103.8.1)**

- a. Fire Apparatus access roads shall be provided in accordance with section 503.

**Location (CFC 3103.8.2)**

- a. 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 m<sup>2</sup>).
2. Membrane structures or tents need not be separated from buildings when all of the following conditions are met:
  - The aggregate floor area of the membrane structure or tent shall not exceed 10,000 square feet (929 m<sup>2</sup>).
  - 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.
  - Required means of egress are provided for both the building and the membrane structure or tent including travel distances.
  - 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.

**Location of structures in excess of 15,000 square feet in area (CFC 3103.8.3).**

- a. Membrane structures having an area of 15,000 square feet (1394 m<sup>2</sup>) 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.

**Membrane structures on buildings (CFC 3103.8.4).**

- a. Membrane structures that are erected on buildings, balconies, decks, or other structures shall be regulated as permanent membrane structures in accordance with section 3102 of the California Building Code.

**Connecting Corridors (CFC 3103.8.5).**

- a. Tents or membrane structures are allowed to be joined together by means of corridors. Exit doors shall be provided at each end of such corridors. On each side of such corridor and approximately opposite each other, there shall be provided openings not less than 12 feet (3658 mm) wide.

**Fire Break (CFC 3103.8.6).**

- a. An unobstructed fire break passage way or fire road not less than 12 feet (3658 mm) wide and free from guy ropes or other obstructions shall be maintained on all sides of all tents and membrane structures unless otherwise approved by the fire code official.

**Anchorage Required (CFC 3103.9)**

- a. Tents 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.

**Means of Egress (CFC 3103.12)**

- a. Means of egress for temporary tents and membrane structures shall be in accordance with CFC Sections 3103.12.1 through 3103.12.8.

**Distribution (CFC 3103.12.1)**

- a. 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.

**Number (CFC 3103.12.2)**

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

**Table 3103.12.2**

Occupant Load	Minimum Number of Each Means of Egress	Minimum Width of Each Means of Egress (inches)	
		Tent or Canopy	Membrane Structure
10-199	2	72	36
200-499	3	72	72
500-999	4	96	72
1,000-1,999	5	120	96
2,000-2,999	6	120	96
Over 3,000*	7	120	96

**Exit Openings from Tents (CFC 3103.12.3)**

- a. Exit openings from the structure shall remain open unless covered by a flame resistant curtain.
- b. The curtains shall be free sliding on a metal support mounted at least 80" above floor level.
- c. **The colors of the curtains shall contrast with the colors of the tent.**

**Doors (CFC 3103.12.4)**

- a. Exit doors shall swing in the direction of the exit travel.

**Aisles (CFC 3103.12.5)**

- a. In areas serving only employees, the minimum aisle width shall be 24".
- b. In areas serving the public, the minimum aisle width shall be 44" from seating areas and shall progressively increase at least an additional 1 foot of aisle width for each 50 people served by that aisle.

**Arrangement and Maintenance (CFC 3103.12.5.1)**

- a. Arrangement of aisles shall be subject to approval by the fire code official and shall be maintained clear at all times during occupancy.

**Exit Signs (CFC 3103.12.6)**

- a. Exits shall be clearly marked with exit signs at each required exit and where otherwise necessary to clearly indicate the direction of egress.
- b. Occupancy loads serving less than 50 are exempt.
- c. Exit sign illumination (CFC 3103.12.6.1)  
Exit signs shall be either listed self-luminous type or be illuminated either internally or externally by lights according to the following specifications.
  1. Two separate circuits, for occupancy loads under 300.
  2. Two separate sources of power, one from an approved emergency system such as batteries or generators for loads over 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.

**Means of Egress - Illumination (CFC 3103.12.7)**

- a. All means of egress shall be illuminated while the structure is occupied with an intensity of at least 1 foot-candle (11 lux) at floor level.
- b. The circuits for illumination must be on a separate circuit or power source.

**Maintenance - Means of Egress (CFC 3103.12.8)**

- a. The required width of exits, aisles, and passageways shall be maintained at all times to a public way. Guy wires, guy ropes, and other support members shall not cross a means of egress at height of less than 8 feet (2438 mm). The surface of means of egress shall be maintained in an approved manner.

**Flame Propagation Performance Treatment (CFC 3104.2)**

- a. Before a permit is granted, the owner or agent shall file a certificate with the Kern County Fire Department from an approved testing laboratory that shows that all parts of the structure comply with NFPA 701 for flame resistance. It shall include the following information:
  1. Names and addresses of the owners of the structure.
  2. Date the fabric was last treated with a flame retardant solution.
  3. Trade name or kind of chemical used in treatment.
  4. Name of person or firm treating the material.
  5. Name of testing agency and the test standard used.
- b. The certification must be valid for the duration of the permit.
- c. All structures shall have a permanent label that identifies the size and material type.

**Combustible Materials (CFC 3107.2)**

- a. No combustible materials such as hay, shavings, or sawdust shall be stored in a structure containing an assembly occupancy.
- b. Exceptions are allowed if the materials are used for daily feeding or care of animals, or the sawdust/shavings are kept damp.
- c. No combustible materials shall be stored under seating at any time.
- d. Combustible materials and vegetation must be cleared to within 30 feet of the structure. Grass must be mowed to be no more than 1" tall and no overhanging brush shall compromise the fuel break.
- e. Combustible trash shall be removed at least once a day from the structure when it is occupied.

**Smoking (CFC 3107.3)**

- a. Smoking shall not be permitted in any structure.
- b. Approved "No Smoking" signs shall be conspicuously posted.

**Open or Exposed Flames (CFC 3107.4)**

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

**Fireworks (CFC 3107.5)**

- a. Fireworks shall not be used within 100 feet of the structure.

**Spot Lighting (CFC 3107.6)**

- a. Spot or effect lighting shall only be powered by electricity.
- b. All combustible construction located within 6 feet (1829 mm) of such equipment shall be protected with approved noncombustible insulation at least 9.25 inches (235 mm) thick.

**Safety Film (CFC 3107.7)**

- a. Motion pictures shall not be displayed in tents or membrane structures unless the motion picture film is safety film.

**Clearance (CFC 3107.8)**

- a. There shall be a minimum clearance of at least 3 feet (914 mm) from the fabric envelope and all contents located within the structure.

**Portable Fire Extinguishers (CFC 3107.9)**

Approved portable fire extinguishers complying with CFC Section 906 shall be provided and placed in location as required by CCR, Title 19, Div. 1, Ch. 2, Art. 3, Sect. 319

- a. One class 2-A fire extinguisher shall be provided in every tent having a floor area between 500 sq. ft. and 1000 sq. ft. plus one 2A fire extinguisher in each auxiliary adjacent tent. One additional extinguisher for each 2,000 sq. ft. or fraction thereof.
- b. At least one Class 10 B-C fire extinguisher shall be provided with each generator or transformer

**Fire Protection Equipment (CFC 3107.10)**

- a. Fire hose, water, and supplies shall be maintained as required by the fire code official.

**Occupant Load Factors (CFC 3107.11)**

- a. The occupant load allowed in the assembly structure will be determined by the fire code official based on Chapter 10 of the *California Fire Code*.

**Heating and Cooking Equipment (CFC 3107.12)**

- a. Heating and cooking equipment shall be in accordance with Sections 3107.12.1 through 3107.12.7.

**Liquid Petroleum Gas (CFC 3107.13)**

- a. The storage, handling and use of LP-gas and LP-gas equipment shall be in accordance with Sections 3107.13.1 through 3107.13.3

**Flammable and Combustible Liquid Storage (CFC 3107.14)**

- a. The storage of flammable and combustible liquids and the use of flammable-liquid-fueled equipment shall be in accordance with Sections 3107.14.1 through 3107.14.3

**Display of Motor Vehicles (CFC 3107.15)**

- a. Liquid- and gas-fueled vehicles and equipment used for display within tents or membrane structures shall be in accordance with Sections 3107.15.1 through 3107.15.3

**Separation of Generators (CFC 3107.16)**

- a. All internal combustion power sources shall be located at least 20 feet from the structure.
- b. They shall be isolated from the public by fencing and enclosure or approved means.

**Standby Personnel (CFC 3107.17)**

- a. Where, in the opinion of the fire code official, it is essential for public safety in a tent or membrane structure used as a place of assembly or any other use where people congregate, because of the number of persons, or the nature of the performance, exhibition, display, contest or activity, the owner, agent, or lease shall employ one or more qualified persons, as required and approved, to remain on duty during the times such places are open to the public, or when such activity is being conducted.

**Combustible vegetation (CFC 3107.18)**

- a. Combustible vegetation that could create a fire hazard shall be removed from the area occupied by a tent or membrane structure, and from areas within 30 feet (9144 mm) of such structures.

**Combustible Waste Material (CFC 3107.19)**

- a. The floor surface inside tents or membrane structures and the grounds outside and within a 30-foot (9144 mm) perimeter shall be kept free of combustible waste and other combustible materials that could create a fire hazard. Such waste shall be stored in approved containers and removed from the premises not less than once a day during the period the structure is occupied by the public.

**Obstructions (CFC 3107.20)**

- a. Exits, aisles and passageways shall not be blocked or have their minimum clear width obstructed in any manner by ticket offices, turnstiles, concessions, chairs, equipment, animal chutes, poles or guy ropes, or anything whatsoever, nor shall they be blocked by persons for whom no seats are available. In occupancies having fixed seating, and on request of the owner or manager, the enforcing agency may permit modifications from the provisions of this code to accommodate seating for handicapped persons using mechanical aids such as, but not limited to, walkers and wheelchairs.

**Violations (CFC 109.4)**

- a. **Persons who shall violate a provision of this code or shall fail to comply with any of the requirements thereof or who shall erect, install, alter, repair, or do work in violation of the approved construction documents or directive of the fire code official, or of a permit or certificate used under provisions of this code shall be guilty of a [specific offense], punishable by a fine of not more than [amount] dollars or by imprisonment not exceeding [number of days], or both such fine and imprisonment. Each day that a violation continues after due notice has been served shall be deemed a separate offense.**

Additional Requirements: \_\_\_\_\_  
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**Mailing Address:**  
Kern County Fire Department  
2820 M St.  
Bakersfield, CA 93301  
Attn: Fire Prevention