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## TENTS AND OTHER MEMBRANE STRUCTURES

*Compliance with all applicable provisions of the International Fire Code (IFC), 2015 edition, is required. Depending on the size and type of the event, additional conditions not listed below may be required.*

**Permit** A Building Permit is required for tents with sidewalls and membrane structures having an area in excess of 400 square feet. A permit and on-site inspection may be required before the event can begin. Contact the City of Foley Building Department at 251-952-4011 for permit information.

*Exception:* Tents open on all sides. If the tent or combination of tents exceeds 700 square feet, a separation of 12 feet or more is required between the structure or combination of structures.

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

*Exception:* Separation distance between tents and membrane structures not used for cooking, is not required when the aggregate floor area does not exceed 15,000 square feet.

**Bracing** 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.

**Flame Resistance** Tents or membrane structures and their appurtenances, sidewalls, drops, tarpaulins, and combustible decorative materials shall be composed of flame-resistant material or shall be treated with a flame retardant material in an approved manner (see NFPA 701 for performance criteria). Tents or membrane structures shall have a permanent affixed label bearing the identification of size and fabric or material type.

**Smoking** Smoking shall not be permitted in tents or membrane structures. Approved "No Smoking" signs shall be conspicuously posted.

**Exits** Exits shall not be obstructed in any manner. Guy wire and support ropes shall not cross a means of egress at a height of less than 8 feet. Exits shall be clearly marked with approved exit signs when the exit serves an occupant load of 50 or greater. The surface of means of egress shall be maintained in an approved manner. Exits shall be spaced at appropriately equal intervals around the perimeter of the tent or membrane structure, and shall be located such that all points are 100 feet or less from an exit.

TABLE 2403.12.2  
 MINIMUM NUMBER OF MEANS OF EGRESS AND MEANS OF EGRESS WIDTHS FROM TEMPORARY MEMBRANE STRUCTURES AND TENTS

OCCUPANT LOAD	MINIMUM NUMBER OF MEANS OF EGRESS	MINIMUM WIDTH OF EACH MEANS OF EGRESS (inches)	
		Tent	Membrane Structure
10 to 199	2	72	36
200 to 499	3	72	72
500 to 999	4	96	72
1,000 to 1,999	5	120	96
2,000 to 2,999	6	120	96
Over 3,000 <sup>a</sup>	7	120	96

For SI: 1 inch = 25.4 mm.

a. When the occupant load exceeds 3,000, the total width of means of egress (in inches) shall not be less than the total occupant load multiplied by 0.2 inches per person.



**Open Flames** 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 of the tent or membrane structures while open to the public unless approved by the fire code official.

**Cooking/Warming Devices** Tents where cooking is performed shall be separated from other tents or membrane structures by a minimum of 20 feet. Cooking and heating equipment shall not be located within 10 feet of exits or combustible materials. Warming of foods that use solid flammables, butane or other similar devices which do not pose an ignition hazard are approved.

**Fire Protection** A portable fire extinguisher having a minimum 2A:10:BC rating shall be provided at an interval of not less than 75 feet of travel distance. A class "K" extinguisher will be required within 30' of any cooking operation producing grease laden vapors.

**Combustible Materials** All combustible materials shall be kept away from exit travel and heat sources.

**Generators** Generators and other internal combustion power sources shall be separated from tents or membrane structures by a minimum of 20 feet and shall be isolated from contact with the public by fencing, enclosure or other approved means.

**Electrical** All electrical shall be in accordance with the National Electric Code, 2011 edition.

**Electrical Cords** Extension cords shall be plugged directly into an approved receptacle and serve only one portable appliance. All cords shall be protected from physical damage and foot traffic. Spliced wires and open junction boxes are not permitted.

**LP Gas** LP gas containers shall be located outside. Safety release valves shall be pointed away from the tent or membrane structure. Portable containers with a capacity of 500 gallons or less shall have a minimum separation between the container and structure of not less than 10 feet.

**Fire Access Roads** Fire Apparatus access roads shall be provided in accordance with Section 503.

**If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact:**

**Office: 251-971-6028**

**Fax: 251-943-7432**

**Email: [fireinspections@cityoffoley.org](mailto:fireinspections@cityoffoley.org)**