

# Tent and Canopy Application - Information Sheet

The following codes have been taken from Chapter 24 of the NYS Fire Code, this is a partial list intended to answer common and frequently asked questions. All tent structures are subject to the code in its entirety.

§F2402

## DEFINITIONS

**§F2402.1 Definitions.** The following words and terms shall, for the purposes of this chapter and as used elsewhere in this code, have the meanings shown herein.

**CANOPY.** A structure, enclosure or shelter constructed of fabric or pliable materials supported by any manner, except by air or the contents it protects, and is open without sidewalls or drops on 75 percent or more of the perimeter.

**TENT.** A structure, enclosure or shelter constructed of fabric or pliable material supported by any manner except by air or the contents that it protects.

§F2403

## TEMPORARY TENTS, CANOPIES AND MEMBRANE STRUCTURES

**§F2403.1 General.** All temporary tents, canopies and membrane structures shall comply with this section.

**§F2403.2 Approval required.** Tents and membrane structures having an area in excess of 200 square feet (19 m<sup>2</sup>) and canopies in excess of 400 square feet (37 m<sup>2</sup>) shall not be erected, operated or maintained for any purpose without first obtaining a permit and approval from the code enforcement official.

**§F2403.5 Construction documents.** A detailed site and floor plan for tents, canopies or membrane structures with an occupant load of 50 or more shall be provided with each application for approval. The tent, canopy or membrane structure floor plan shall indicate details of the means of egress facilities, seating capacity, arrangement of the seating and location and type of heating and electrical equipment.

### Access, Location, and Parking

**§F2403.7 Access, location and parking.** Access location and parking for temporary tents, canopies and membrane structures shall be in accordance with this section.

**§F2403.7.1 Access.** Fire apparatus access roads shall be provided in accordance with §F503.

**§F2403.7.2 Location.** Tents, canopies or membrane structures shall not be located within 20 feet (6096 mm) of lot lines, buildings, other tents, canopies 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, tent or canopy.

**§F2403.7.5 Fire break.** An unobstructed fire break passageway 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, canopies and membrane structures unless otherwise approved by the code enforcement official.

## Fire Safety Requirements

**SF2403.10 Seating arrangements.** Seating in tents, canopies or membrane structures shall be in accordance with Chapter F10.

**SF2403.11 Means of egress.** Means of egress for temporary tents, canopies and membrane structures shall be in accordance with this section.

**SF2403.11.3 Exit openings from tents.** Exit openings from tents shall remain open unless covered by a flame-resistant curtain. The curtain shall comply with the following requirements:

**SF2403.11.5.1 Arrangement and maintenance.** The arrangement of aisles shall be subject to approval by the code enforcement official and shall be maintained clear at all times during occupancy.

**SF2403.11.6 Exit signs.** Exits shall be clearly marked. Exit signs shall be installed at required exit doorways and where otherwise necessary to indicate clearly the direction of egress when the exit serves an occupant load of 50 or more.

**SF2403.11.8 Maintenance of means of egress.** 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 a height of less than 8 feet (2438 mm). The surface of means of egress shall be maintained in an approved manner.

### **SF2404**

#### **TEMPORARY AND PERMANENT TENTS, CANOPIES AND MEMBRANE STRUCTURES**

**SF2404.1 General.** All tents, canopies and membrane structures, both temporary and permanent, shall be in accordance with this section. Permanent tents, canopies and membrane structures shall also comply with the *Building Code of New York State*.

**SF2404.2 Flame-resistant treatment.** Before a permit is granted, the owner or agent shall file with the code enforcement official a certificate executed by an approved testing laboratory, certifying that the tents, canopies and membrane structures and their appurtenances, sidewalls, drops and tarpaulins, floor coverings, bunting, combustible decorative materials and effects, including sawdust when used on floors or passageways, shall be composed of flame-resistant material or shall be treated with a flame retardant in an approved manner and meet the requirements for flame resistance as determined in accordance with NFPA 701, and that such flame resistance is effective for the period specified by the permit.

**SF2404.3 Label.** Membrane structures, tents or canopies shall have a permanently affixed label bearing the identification of size and fabric or material type.

**SF2404.4 Certification.** An affidavit or affirmation shall be submitted to the code enforcement official and a copy retained on the premises on which the tent or air-supported structure is located. The affidavit shall attest to the following information relative to the flame resistance of the fabric:

**SF2404.5 Combustible materials.** Hay, straw, shavings or similar combustible materials shall not be located within any tent, canopy or membrane structure containing an assembly occupancy, except the materials necessary for the daily feeding and care of animals. Sawdust and shavings utilized for a public performance or exhibit shall not be prohibited provided the sawdust and shavings are kept damp. Combustible materials shall not be permitted under stands or seats at any time. The areas within and adjacent to the tent or air-supported structure shall be maintained clear of all combustible materials or vegetation that could create a fire hazard within 20 feet (6096 mm) of the structure. Combustible trash shall be removed at least once a day from the structure during the period the structure is occupied by the public.

**§F2404.6 Smoking.** Smoking shall not be permitted in tents, canopies or membrane structures. Approved "No Smoking" signs shall be conspicuously posted in accordance with §F310.

**§F2404.7 Open or exposed flame.** 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 (6096 mm) of the tent, canopy or membrane structures while open to the public unless approved by the code enforcement official.

**§F2404.11 Clearance.** There shall be a minimum clearance of at least 3 feet (914 mm) between the fabric envelope and all contents located inside the tent or membrane structure.

### **Fire Protection**

**§F2404.12 Portable fire extinguishers.** Portable fire extinguishers shall be provided as required by §F906.

**§F2404.15.3 Location.** Cooking and heating equipment shall not be located within 10 feet (3048 mm) of exits or combustible materials.

**§F2404.15.4 Operations.** Operations such as warming of foods, cooking demonstrations and similar operations that use solid flammables, butane or other similar devices which do not pose an ignition hazard, shall be approved.

**§F2404.15.5 Cooking tents.** Tents where cooking is performed shall be separated from other tents, canopies or membrane structures by a minimum of 20 feet (6096 mm).

**§F2404.15.6 Outdoor cooking.** Outdoor cooking that produces sparks or grease-laden vapors shall not be performed within 20 feet (6096 mm) from a tent, canopy or membrane structure.

### **LP Gas**

**§F2404.16 LP-gas.** The storage, handling and use of LP-gas and LP-gas equipment shall be in accordance with this section.

**§F2404.16.1 General.** LP-gas equipment such as tanks, piping, hoses, fittings, valves, tubing and other related components shall be approved and in accordance with Chapter F38 and with the *Fuel Gas Code of New York State*.

**§F2404.16.2 Location of containers.** LP-gas containers shall be located outside. Safety release valves shall be pointed away from the tent, canopy or membrane structure.

**§F2404.16.3 Protection and security.** Portable LP-gas containers, piping, valves and fittings which are located outside and are being used to fuel equipment inside a tent, canopy or membrane structure shall be adequately protected to prevent tampering, damage by vehicles or other hazards and shall be located in an approved location. Portable LP-gas containers shall be securely fastened in place to prevent unauthorized movement.

### **Generators**

**§F2404.19 Separation of generators.** Generators and other internal combustion power sources shall be separated from tents, canopies or membrane structures by a minimum of 20 feet (6096 mm) and shall be isolated from contact with the public by fencing, enclosure or other approved means.

### Housekeeping

**SF2404.21 Vegetation removal.** Combustible vegetation shall be removed from the area occupied by a tent, canopy or membrane structure, and from areas within 30 feet (9144 mm) of such structures.

**SF2404.22 Waste material.** The floor surface inside tents, canopies or membrane structures and the grounds outside and within a 30-foot (9144 mm) perimeter shall be kept clear of combustible waste. Such waste shall be stored in approved containers until removed from the premises.