



City of Santa Monica Building and Safety Division

Special Events Guide

This list is to be used as a general guide.

It is not inclusive of all code requirements and inspection criteria.

Per California Building (CBC), Fire (CFC) and Electrical Code (CEC) & City of Santa Monica Administrative Instruction "Events" number II-4-4 and the Santa Monica Municipal Code (SMMC)

California Codes available at www.bsc.ca.gov

Users of portable power systems are responsible for notifying the City of Santa Monica's Department of Building and Safety sufficiently in advance to permit completion of the inspection, the correction of any code violations and re-inspection if necessary. Equipment shall be in compliance with applicable codes, inspected and approved before it is energized and put into use.

Portable Structures Definition: Units designed to be moved including but not limited to, amusement rides, attractions concessions, tents, trailers, trucks, and similar units. 525.1CEC

Equipment for special events

- Must be listed for the location of installation (e.g. indoor or outdoor, etc.).110.3 CEC
- Equipment in outdoor locations must be NEMA 3R. (Designed to provide a DEGREE of protection against 45 degree angled rain)
- Outlets and luminaries (fixtures) must be wet or damp location as appropriate.410.10, 406.8 CEC
- Distribution and power generation equipment must not be accessible to the general public. 525.10 CEC
- Cable ramps or rubberized mats should be used to cover all cords, wires, hoses, Etc. IF located within a path of travel. 525.20(g). CEC Provide approved wheelchair ramp over cords, wires, hoses located within an accessible path of travel. Chapter 11B CBC
- An alternate accessible path of travel is required when the public right-of-way is obstructed.

Receptacles

- Must be protected at their listed ampacity.525.21(c) CEC
- Must be Ground-Fault Circuit Interrupter (GFCI) protected as required in section 525.23 (a) CEC
- All non-locking types must have GFCI protection.525.23CEC
- Must be protected at their listed ampacity.525.21 CEC
- Must be wet or damp location listed as needed 525.2(a) CEC
- Must be rated sunlight resistant as needed. 525.20(a) CEC
- Must be routed outside of pedestrian and vehicular traffic or suitably protected or guarded.525.2 (g) CEC
- Must be listed for extra hard usage. 525.20 (a) CEC
- Single conductor is acceptable if type W. 525. 20(b) CEC



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- Must be continuous without splice between boxes and fittings. 525.20 (d) CEC
- Cord connectors must not be laid on the ground, unless listed for wet locations. 525.20 (e) CEC
- Connectors must not be placed in areas accessible to the public, unless guarded. 525.20 (e) CEC

Lighting

- Electrical lamps and lighting equipment must be kept away from combustible material 410.11 & 410.12 CEC
- All lamps must be protected from accidental contact or breakage by means of a suitable fixture type or lamp holder with guard. 525.21 (b) CEC
- Egress lighting must not be protected by a GFCI. 525.23 (b) CEC
- Electrical lamps and lighting equipment must be kept away from combustible material 410.11 & 410.12 CEC
- All lamps must be protected from accidental contact or breakage by means of egress lighting must not be protected by a GFCI. 525.23 (b) CEC
- Suitable fixture type or lamp holder with guard. 525.21 (b) CEC
- Required egress lighting and exit signs must not be on the same circuit as general use receptacles or decorative lighting. 252.23(c) CEC
- Festoon lighting or cord sets shall be installed at least 10 feet above ground where accessible to Public.525.21 CEC

Portable Distribution Boxes

- When installed outdoors, must be wet location listed and mounted so that the enclosure is not less than six inches (6") above the ground.525.22 (a) CEC
- Boxes must be designed to ensure no live parts are exposed to accidental contact. 525.22 (a) CEC
- Must be properly labeled identifying use of circuit. 110.22 CEC

Equipment Bonding

- Equipment connected to the same source must be bonded.
- The equipment grounding conductor of all sources of power supply that serves structures separated by less than 12 feet shall be bonded together at the portable structure. (Bonded to the same grounding electrode system)(Minimum bonding conductor is 6AWG copper. See table 250.122 CEC for larger sizes. 525.11 CEC
 - Examples include; metallic raceways and metal sheathed cables, metal enclosures of electrical equipment, metal frames and metal parts of rides, concessions, tents, trailers, trucks, stages, or other equipment that contain or support electrical equipment.
- All equipment requiring grounding must have grounding installed in accordance with Article 250 (section 525.31 CEC).



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Equipment Grounding

- Must be grounded unless generators meet the criteria of sections 250.34(A) and (B) 250.52, 250.34 CEC

Portable and Vehicle mounted generators

- Must use the identified grounding point on the generator.
- Must be properly guarded to avoid contact by the general public.
- Generators must be placed so that exhaust fumes do not enter tents

Ground Rods

- Listed grounding clamps are required.250.8 CEC
- Must be properly guarded to avoid contact by the general public.250.10 CEC

Overhead Conductors

- Must have vertical clearance to ground in compliance with the California Electric Code (section 225.18). CEC
- Portable structures must be at least 15 feet in any direction from overhead conductors not severing the portable structure. 525.3(b) (1) CEC
- These are but a few of the more common sections used in the 2010 California Electrical code (CEC) for additional detailed requirements consult CEC, articles 225,230,250,400,430,445,518,525, 590,640
- Accessibility in Temporary structures are required to meet the same guidelines as newly designed or constructed buildings and facilities shall be accessible to persons with disabilities as required 1101B1, 108 CBC

Inspection

- All tent fabric must be flame resistant. *(A certificate or other proof of approval by a testing laboratory is acceptable as evidence of the required fire resistance. A copy of the certificate must be provided upon request. These certificates should be available from the tent supplier.)*
- Tents must be erected in accordance with manufacturer recommendations, industry standards, and code requirements. Provide size of tent(s) and staking schedule (Water barrels) *(This guideline should be presented to the plan checker and shall be made available to the building inspector at time of inspection.)*

Floor Covering

- The area enclosed by any tent and not less than 10 feet outside of such tent, must be cleared of all flammable or combustible material or vegetation.
- No hay, straw, shavings, or similar combustible materials are permitted within any tent unless they have been treated to make them flame retardant. *(A certificate or other proof of approval by a testing laboratory indicating that the material has been properly treated*



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is acceptable as evidence. A copy of certificates must be provided to Building and safety or the SMFD prior to placing the material within a tent. These certificates are available from the material manufacturer or supplier.)

Exits and Occupant Load for Enclosed Tents

- Tents that have sides attached and rolled up are capable of being enclosed and must meet these requirements even if it is intended for the tent to remain unenclosed during the event.
- The number of separate exits required for enclosed tents is based on the floor area of the tent.
- The maximum number of occupants, called the occupant load, is also based on the floor area of the tent.
 - Occupant load of 49 people (or 343 sq. ft.) or less: **1 exit minimum**
 - Occupant load between 50 people (or 350 sq. ft.) and 600 people (or 4,193 sq. ft.): **2 exits minimum**
 - Occupant load between 601 people (or 4,200 sq. ft.) and 999 people (or 6,993 sq. ft.): **3 exits minimum**
 - Occupant load of 1,000 people (or 7,000 sq. ft.) or more: **4 exits minimum (more may be needed)**
- The occupant load is decreased when tables and chairs are used (banquet style) – the number of required exits remains the same because exits are based on floor area. The following calculation will determine the occupant load with tables and chairs: net square footage of tent floor area / 15 = occupant load with tables and chairs
Example: The number of occupants allowed, with tables and chairs, in a 50'X50' tent with a 10'X20' stage.
2,500 square feet (floor area) – 200 square feet (stage area) / 15 = 153 persons
PLEASE NOTE: These calculations are for planning purposes only and do not represent a legal capacity. The building department will provide capacities based on submitted set-up plans.
- Each EXIT must be provided with an EXIT sign. *The word "EXIT" must be plainly legible in letters at least 6 inches high and with strokes not less than 3/4 inch wide.*
- Exits must be definable from the rest of the tent (different color, fabric etc.)
- If the tent is to be occupied after sunset, emergency lighting must be provided.

Exit Requirements for All Tents

- The minimum width of an exit must not be less than 32 inches.
- Guy wires or guy ropes must not cross an exit at a height of less than 8 feet.
- Where tents are placed near fences or other obstructions, a clear exit path must be maintained to an area sufficiently away from the tent.
- Tent stakes must be railed off, capped, or covered.



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Fire Protection

- One portable fire extinguisher (dry chemical ABC type) must be furnished at each exit of an enclosed tent.
- Smoking is prohibited in any tent.
- Pyrotechnics, open flames (including use of sterno and other food warming devices), and cooking equipment must be approved in advance by the SMFM.
- Commercial cooking equipment such as grills and broilers, when used within a tent, must meet the same requirements for indoor commercial kitchens (i.e., proper ventilation, fire suppression systems).
- Commercial cooking operations must be protected by an approved kitchen fire suppression system.
- Vehicles necessary to the operation of the tent facility must be parked at least 20 feet from any tent.
- No other vehicle may be parked within 100 feet unless parked on a public street.
- Liquids having a flash point below 200F cannot be stored in any tent or closer than 50 feet.
- Applicable Standards of the State Fire Prevention Code
 - NFPA 1, Fire Prevention Code
 - NFPA 101, Life Safety Code
 - NFPA 102, Standard for Grandstands, Folding and Telescopic Seating, Tents, and Membrane Structures
 - NFPA 96, Standard for Ventilation Control and Fire Protection of Commercial Cooking Operations
 - NFPA 70, National Electrical Code