REGULATIONS FOR OUTDOOR GATHERINGS AND EVENTS / TENTS, CANOPIES & MEMBRANE STRUCTURES

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APPROVED BY: Michael D. Esparza

Riverside Municipal Code, Section 16.32.020

Under certain circumstances, the Riverside Municipal Code, Section 16.32.020, for indoor/outdoor gatherings and events, requires a permit. Upon application for a permit, a site plan is required. The site plan must include, but is not limited to fire lanes, aisles, position of booths, rides, buildings, parking areas, cooking areas, generators, exits, exit ways, fire extinguishers, and seating arrangements. Tent use may require specific floor plans be submitted. All required distances shall be indicated on the site plan. Permits shall be obtained and all requirements completed prior to a fire inspection.

If the outdoor gathering or event includes a carnival and/or the use or display of fireworks or pyrotechnical special effects, a separate permit(s) is required.

A. **Seat Stability CFC 1025.12** – Loose seats or folding chairs in quantities more than 200 shall be bonded together in groups of three or more when used for other than dining purposes.

B. **Number of Exits NFPA 101-12.2.4.4** – All fenced outdoor assembly areas shall have not less than two widely separated means of egress from the enclosure. Areas where the occupant load is more than 6,000 but less than 9,000 shall be served by not less than three means of egress, and areas where the occupant load is greater than 9,000 shall be served by not less than four means of egress. The factor for determining occupant load shall be seven square feet per person.

C. **Class K Portable Fire Extinguishers CFC 904.11.5.2 & 906 –** Concession stands or vendors with cooking operations that include deep fat fryers shall provide a Class K wet chemical extinguisher. A minimum 2A:10BC fire extinguisher shall also be provided.

D. **Wet Chemical Systems CFC 904.5** – Automatic fire extinguishing systems installed for the protection of commercial cooking equipment must have a current service tag verifying that service in accordance with manufacturer's recommendations has been performed within the past six months.

E. **Stages - Portable Fire Extinguishers- CFC 906 -** All stages shall have access to a minimum 2A10BC Fire Extinguisher within 75 feet of travel distance.

F. **Portable Fire Extinguishers CFC 906** – Fire extinguishers with a minimum rating of 2A:10BC shall be located throughout the event. Maximum travel distance from any point within the event to a portable fire extinguisher shall not exceed 75 feet.

Fire Prevention
3900 Main Street 3rd Floor * Riverside, California 92522 * (951) 826-5737
Fax: (951) 826-2539 * www.RiversideCa.gov/fire

G. **Dimensions CFC 503.2.1** – Fire apparatus access shall be provided and have an unobstructed width of not less than 20 feet and an unobstructed vertical clearance of not less than 13 feet 6 inches. Alternate means of access or reduced clearances may be approved by the fire marshal.

H. **Generators, Portable Fire Extinguishers CFC 906** – Each generator or generator area shall be provided with at least one fire extinguisher with a rating of not less than 2A:10BC.

I. **Extension Cords CFC 605.5** – Temporary power cords shall not be affixed to structures, extended through walls, or subject to environmental or physical damage. Cords must be secured to prevent a tripping hazard. Large diameter cords must be provided with cord bridges or ramps to facilitate the crossing of wheel chairs, strollers, and similar wheeled equipment.

J. **Secured Gates and Barricades CFC 503.5.1** – When required, gates and barricades shall be secured in an approved manner. Roads, trails, and other access ways that have been closed and obstructed in the manner prescribed by Section 503.5 shall not be trespassed on or used unless authorized by the fire code official.

K. **Obstruction of Fire Apparatus Access Roads CFC 503.4** – Fire apparatus access roads shall not be obstructed in any manner, including parking of vehicles. Minimum road widths shall be maintained unless approved by the fire code official.

L. **Obstruction CFC 508.5.4** – Posts, fences, vehicles, growth, trash, storage and other materials or objects shall not be placed within 15 feet of fire hydrants, fire department inlet connections or fire protection system control valves in a manner that would prevent such equipment or fire hydrants from being immediately discernible. The fire department shall not be deterred or hindered from gaining immediate access to fire protection equipment and hydrants.

M. **Means of Egress Continuity CFC 1003.6** – The path of egress travel along a means of egress shall not be interrupted by any building element other than a means of egress component as specified in chapter 1003. Obstructions shall not be placed in the required width of a means of egress except projections permitted by chapter 10. The required capacity of a means of egress system shall not be diminished along the path of egress travel.

PARADE FLOATS NFPA 1 Section - 10.17

A. **Decorative Material – NFPA 1 Section - 10.17.2** – Decorative material on parade floats shall be noncombustible or flame retardant.

B. **Fire Protection – NFPA 1 Section - 10.17.3 –** Motorized parade floats and towing apparatus shall be provided with a minimum 2-A:10-B:C-rated portable fire extinguisher readily accessible to the operator.

TENTS, CANOPIES, AND MEMBRANE STRUCTURES

A permit is required for the use and/or display of tents and membrane structures in excess of 200 square feet and canopies in excess of 400 square feet. Exception: Canopies open on all sides up to 700 square feet.

Definitions

A. **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.

B. **Membrane Structure** – An air-inflated, air supported, cable, or frame-covered structure, which is not otherwise defined as a tent or canopy.

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

Requirements:

A. **Locations – CFC 2403.8.2** - Tents shall not be located within 20 feet of lot lines, buildings, membrane structures, other tents and canopies, parked vehicles, or internal combustion engines. For the purpose of determining required distances, support ropes and guywires shall be considered as part of the tent. When tents are **not** used for cooking, separation distance from other tents, canopies, and membrane structures is not required when aggregate floor area does not exceed 15,000 square feet. (See Code Exceptions)

B. **Flame Propagation Performance Treatment – CFC 2404.2 -** The sidewalls, drops, and tops of temporary membrane structures, tents, and canopies shall be composed of flame-resistant material or shall be treated with a flame retardant in an approved manner and shall have a permanently affixed label attesting to the flame resistance.

C. **Portable Fire Extinguishers – CFC2404.12 & 906 -** Portable fire extinguishers are required to be located such that travel from any point in the tent, canopy, or temporary membrane structure to a fire extinguisher does not exceed 75 feet. Fire extinguishers are to have a minimum rating of 2A:10BC and be permanently mounted on a support member. (See CFC 2404.2 for exact regulations)

D. **Occupant Load Factors - CFC 2404.14** - The maximum occupant load of the tent, canopy, or membrane structure is to be determined by the fire department in accordance with the occupant load limits for assembly occupancies.

E. **Means of Egress CFC - 2403.12.1**- Exits shall be spaced at approximately equal intervals around the perimeter and shall be located such that all points are 100 feet or less from an exit. There shall be at least one exit and not less than the number of exits required by Table 2403.12.2. Exit openings from tents shall remain open unless covered by a flame-resistant curtain that is free sliding on a metal support located a minimum of 8 feet above the floor and arranged such that no part of the curtain obstructs the exit. Exit curtains shall be of a color that contrasts with the color of the tent. Exit doors shall swing in the direction of exit travel. Exit width and access shall be maintained to a public way. (CFC 2403.12.5)

F. **Aisles - CFC 1025.2 & 2403.12.5** - Aisles shall not be less than 44 inches in width. Seating row widths shall not be less than 12 inches. Rows shall be increased by 0.3 inch for every additional seat beyond 14, but the width need not be more than 22 inches. When more than 200 loose seats or folding chairs are used they shall be bonded together in groups of three or more.

G. **Exit & Emergency Illumination – CFC 2403.12.6, 2403.12.6.1** - Means of egress illumination shall be provided. Power for these devices shall be provided from a separate circuit or source of power when the occupant load is 300 or less. For occupancy loads in excess of 300, an emergency power source shall be provided by batteries, on-site generator, etc.

H. **Smoking CFC 2404.6** - Smoking is prohibited in membrane structures, tents and canopies or in adjacent areas where hay, straw, sawdust, or other combustible materials are stored or used. "NO SMOKING" signs shall be conspicuously posted.

I. **Open or Exposed Flame CFC 2404.7**– Open Flame or other devices emitting flame, fire or heat or any flammable or combustible liquid, gas, charcoal or other cooking device or any other unapproved devices shall not be permitted inside or located within 20 feet of the tent, canopy or membrane structures while open to the public unless approved by the fire code official.

J. **Heating and Cooking Equipment – CFC 2404.15** - Cooking and heating equipment shall be vented to the outside air by approved means. Vents and flues shall be a minimum of 12 inches from sides and tops of tents, canopies, and temporary membrane structures. Cooking and heating equipment shall not

be located within 10 feet of an exit or combustible material. Tents where cooking is performed shall be separated from membrane structures, other tents, and canopies by a minimum of 20 feet. Outdoor cooking that produces sparks or grease-laden vapors shall be at least 20 feet from tents, canopies, and membrane structures. The warming of previously prepared food is not considered to be cooking and is exempt from these requirements.

K. **LP Gas – CFC 2404.16 -** LP-gas containers shall be located on the outside, a minimum of 10 feet for containers 500 gallons or less and 25 feet for containers more than 500 gallons from tents, canopies, and temporary membrane structures. Containers shall be protected to prevent tampering, damage, or tipping over.

L. **Flammable & Combustible Liquids – CFC 2404.17 -** Flammable-liquid-fueled equipment shall not be used in tents, canopies, and temporary membrane structures. Flammable and combustible liquids shall be stored outside in an approved manner not less than 50 feet from a tent, canopy, or membrane structure.

M. **Separation of Generators CFC 2404.19** - Generators and other internal combustion power sources shall be separated from tents, canopies, and temporary membrane structures by a minimum of 20 feet and be isolated from contact with the public by fencing, enclosure or other approved means.

N. **Refueling, Flammable & Combustible Liquids – CFC 2404.17** – Refueling shall be performed in an approved location not less than 20 feet from tents, canopies or membrane structures.

O. **Fuel Storage - CFC 2404.18.5.1**- Fuel for vehicles or equipment shall be stored in approved containers in an approved location outside of the structure in accordance with 2404.17.2

P. **Vegetation Removal – CFC 2404.21** - Combustible vegetation shall be removed from the area occupied by a tent, canopy, or membrane structure and from areas within 30 feet of such structures.

Table 2403.12.2 - Minimum Number of Means of Egress and Means of Egress Widths From Temporary Membrane Structures, Tents and Canopies

Occupant Load	Minimum Number of Means of Egress	Minimum Width of Each Means of Egress (inches)	
		x 25.4 for mm	
		Tent or Canopy	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	7	120	96
The total width of means of egress in inches (mm) shall not be less than the total occupant load served by a means of egress multiplied by 0.2 (5.08). Such widths of means of egress shall be divided approximately equally among the separate means of egress.			

Any questions regarding these minimum Fire Department regulations should be directed to the Fire Prevention Bureau by phone at 951-826-5737 or by letter to:

City of Riverside Fire Department
3900 Main Street 3rd Floor
Riverside, CA 92522
We thank you for your cooperation and wish you success with your event!