# AMUSEMENT BUILDINGS

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## California Building Code (CBC) and California Fire Code (CFC)

**Since different standards apply to different size and type of amusement buildings, please read this information in its entirety to ensure that your proposed event is in compliance with all of the applicable codes.**

Amusement Building – An amusement building is defined as a building or portion thereof, temporary or permanent, used for entertainment or educational purposes and that contains a system that transports passengers or provides a walkway through a course so arranged that the means of egress are not apparent due to theatrical distractions, are disguised, or are not readily available due to the method of transportation through the building or structure.

Use of Tents for Amusement Buildings – When tents are approved for use as amusement structures, the tents are not required to meet the requirements herein except as expressly specified for tents.

Permits – A permit is required from the fire department prior to the operation of any amusement building. Application for a permit should be made 30 days prior to the planned opening of the amusement building to ensure an adequate amount of time for plan reviews and field inspections. The applicant is to provide the fire department with copies of the event site and/or floor plans. The applicant is to contact the Fire Prevention Bureau at least 48 hours prior to the event to schedule an inspection. Any special requirements necessary for compliance with fire and life safety provisions will be listed on the permit. The permit fee is $185 and includes the required inspection.

Amusement buildings having an occupant load of 50 or more shall be treated as an 'A' occupancy; all others will be a 'B' occupancy.

### General Requirements

**Fire Alarm Systems** (CBC 907.2.11; CFC 907)

A. An approved smoke-detection system designed in accordance with the provisions of NFPA 72, the National Fire Alarm Code, shall be installed in amusement buildings.
B. The activation of any single station smoke detector, the automatic sprinkler system, or other automatic fire-detection device shall immediately sound an alarm in the building at a constantly supervised location from which the operation of the amusement's systems and features are controlled. Upon receipt of such an alarm, the amusement operator shall place the systems and features into emergency mode.
C. The activation of two or more smoke detectors, a single station smoke detector monitored by an alarm verification zone, the automatic sprinkler system, or other approved automatic fire detection device shall automatically override the amusement's systems and features and place them in emergency mode.

D. Emergency mode for an amusement's systems and features includes, but is not limited to:
   1) Stopping confusing sounds and visual effects,
   2) Activating an approved directional exit marking, and
   3) Causing illumination of the means of egress with light of not less than 1 foot candle.

E. A public address system that is audible throughout the amusement building shall be provided. The public address system may also serve as an alarm system in most cases.

**Fire Sprinkler Systems** (CBC 411.4; CFC 914.7)

A. An automatic sprinkler system shall be installed in all amusement buildings except those where the floor area is less than 1,000 square feet and the exit travel distance from any point is less than 50 feet.
B. The main waterflow switch shall be electrically supervised.
C. When the amusement building is temporary, the sprinkler water supply system may be of an approved temporary type.

**Exiting** (CBC 411.7, 1008.1.9)

A. Illuminated or self-luminous exit signs and directional exit markings shall be provided.
B. Additional low-level signs shall be provided. The bottom of the signs shall not be less than 6 inches or more than 8 inches above the floor.
C. Automatic means of egress illumination provided from an emergency system activated by a loss of building power shall be provided for amusement buildings with an occupant load of 100 or more.
D. For all amusement buildings classified as 'A' occupancies, all exit doors must be equipped with panic hardware. Panic hardware may be omitted from the main exit of 'A' occupancies with an occupant load of less than 300 where the main exit door consists of a single door or pair of doors.

**Other Requirements**

A. Combustible decorative material used in 'A' occupancy amusement buildings shall be flame resistant. Materials that cannot be made flame resistant shall not be used.
B. The maximum occupant load in all 'A' occupancy amusement buildings shall be determined by the building code and shall be posted in a conspicuous location.
C. Portable fire extinguishers shall be provided as determined by the fire inspector. The minimum rating shall not be less than 2A:10BC. The minimum travel distance to an extinguisher shall not exceed 75'.
D. The number and arrangement of exits shall comply with the provisions of the building code.
E. All electrical wiring, including the use of extension cords, shall be installed and used in compliance with the California Electrical Code, its listing, and shall not exceed the maximum amperage for the wire size.

**Tents Used as Amusement Buildings**

A. All fire code requirements for tents shall apply (CFC Chapter 24)
B. The design of the tent shall be approved and shall include features that prevent the accumulation of smoke. (CBC Chapter 31E)
C. The maximum occupancy is limited to 49 people in the tent at any time to maintain this use as a 'B' occupancy.
D. An approved fire watch shall be established and maintained throughout the performance. The person or persons designated as fire watch shall be in two-way communication with a person stationed at a location where the systems and features of the amusement are manually controlled. Upon notification that a fire or other emergency condition exists, the operator shall place all systems and features in emergency mode.
E. All decorative materials shall be composed of flame retardant materials or shall be treated with a flame retardant. Materials that cannot be made flame retardant shall not be used.