



## Tents/Membrane/Inflatables Installed on University of Delaware Property



### General Requirements

Text below is summarized from the 2018 International Fire Code as currently adopted by the City of Newark and also included is UD internal requirements. More specific code criteria will be determined by UD EHS Fire Protection Division upon review.

Please email [fire-safe@udel.edu](mailto:fire-safe@udel.edu) with any questions

**Note for event organizers: Coordination with UD Conference Services/UD Student Centers/UD Grounds/ University Police/ UD Parking may also be required prior to the event being approved.**

**The City of Newark will not approve any tent permits on UD property without prior approval from UD EHS Fire Protection Division.**

**Objective:** To ensure that the site location, set-up, and use of tents, inflatables, canopies and other temporary structures are accomplished in a safe and compliant manor with the Delaware State Fire Prevention Regulations (2021) and the International Fire Code (2018) as adopted by City of Newark.

#### **Tent Size requiring UD EHS Fire Protection Division involvement:**

Tents having a footprint of 400 ft<sup>2</sup> or greater shall be reviewed and approved by UD EHS Fire Protection Division at a minimum of 2 weeks prior to the tent event.

#### **Inflatables requiring UD EHS Fire Protection Division involvement:**

All inflatables installed on University of Delaware shall be reviewed and possibly approved by UD EHS Fire Protection Division at a minimum of 2 weeks prior to the event.

#### **Non anchored and non-weighted**

**tents must be taken down in the event of anticipated wind speeds of 25mph and greater**

#### **Definitions:**

**Tent** - A structure, enclosure, umbrella structure or shelter, with or without sidewalls; constructed of fabric or pliable material supported in any manner except by air or the contents it protects.

**Inflatable (Membrane) Structure:** An air-inflated, air-supported, cable or frame-covered structure as defined by the *International Building Code* and not otherwise defined as a tent.

**Special Event Structure:** Any temporary ground-supported structure, platform, stage, stage scaffolding or rigging, canopy, tower supporting audio or visual effects equipment or similar structures not regulated within the scope of the *International Building Code*.

**Miss Utility Notifications for staking a tent/membrane structure/temporary structure to the ground:**

Miss Utility must be notified in an appropriate amount of time by the installing vendor. Vendors must not break any University ground until a cleared Miss Utility stakeout is confirmed by the vendor. Vendor shall follow Delaware law as prescribed by the following links:

<https://delcode.delaware.gov/title26/c008/sc01/index.html>

<https://www.missutility.net/delaware/>

<https://www.delmarva811.com/>

**Site Plan:**

A site plan must be created to show the tent/inflatable location(s) in relation to buildings/structures, other tents, parking, etc. and must be submitted for review to UD EHS Fire Protection

**Tent Floor Plan:**

Tent floor plans (interior tent layout) must be included in the UD EHS Fire Protection Review. Plan shall show tables, chairs, and other internal arrangements with relation to overall spacing and occupant flow.

**Tent/Membrane/Inflatable Material Flame Resistance Certificates:**

Certificate of flame resistance for the tenting/membrane/inflatable material (vendor should have these on file) must be submitted for review to UD EHS Fire Protection

**Tent/Inflatable Wind Speed Rating:**

Tent/inflatable wind speed rating must be obtained by the installing vendor and documented on the tent/inflatable application. Wind speed ratings must be utilized for event emergency planning purposes for any potential high wind situations during the event.

**Tent Inspection:**

A tent inspection is required to be performed by UD EHS Fire Protections staff for any tent 400 ft<sup>2</sup> and greater prior to the event date/time. The inspection date must be coordinated between the tent applicant and UD EHS Fire Protection Staff a minimum of 1 week in advance of the event date/time. UD EHS Fire Protection Division may waive the inspection requirement based on a risk assessment and staff availability if warranted.

**Tent/inflatable location:**

Tents/inflatables shall not be located within 20 feet of lot lines, buildings, other tents or membrane structures, parked vehicles, internal combustion engines, and generators.

- Some code exceptions may apply to this rule based on the tent size but will require further code review by UD EHS Fire Protection.

Tents/inflatables are not permitted to be installed in fire lanes or in locations that prevent emergency access to buildings or areas by emergency responders.

**Tent/Inflatable Separation:**

An unobstructed fire break of at least 12’ must be maintained between two or more installed tent/inflatable stake lines.

**Tent Exit Openings**

Exits openings (also known as means of egress) shall be provided for every tent erected. The minimum number of exits required is based on the size of the tent and the maximum occupant load calculated for the tent(will be determined by UD Fire Protection). Exit opening locations shall be spaced equally throughout the perimeter of the tent. Occupant load numbers displayed below is a code calculation based on the tent size and use. This number does not reference the number of guests anticipated at the event.

**TABLE 3103.12.2  
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

Exit openings shall remain open and clear from any obstruction at all times.

Exits openings may be covered with a flame resistant curtain and the curtain must be free sliding on a metal support. The metal support shall not be erected less than 80” above the floor level. When the curtain is opened it must not obstruct the code required minimum width. Fire resistant curtains must be of a color that contrasts with the overall tent color.

**Tent Exit Signs:**

Exits openings must be clearly marked. Exit signs must be marked and installed at all required number of exist based on the tent size and occupant load. If the tent event is at times of darkness or if tent walls are installed that cause low lighting conditions inside the tent, then code approved emergency lighting must be installed throughout the tent.

**Tent Fire Extinguishers:**

Tents of 400ft<sup>2</sup> or greater must have code approved and Delaware State Fire Marshal approved fire extinguishers installed. The number of extinguishers required is based on the size and layout of the tent.

#### Smoking/vaping:

Smoking or smoking related activities to include vaping is not permitted on University property and includes inside and around any tents/inflatables.

#### Open Flames in Tents:

Open flames of any kind are not permitted inside tents. Open flames for the purposes of keeping food warm may be approved by UD EHS Fire Protection and overseen by UD Dining Services Staff.

#### Generators:

Generators must be separated from any tent/inflatable by a minimum of 20' and shall be isolated from contact with the general public by fencing, enclosures or other approved means. Generators not installed by UD Electric Shop shall be inspected by a Delaware State Fire Marshal Approved 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Electrical Inspection agency prior to the event. 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Electrical inspection stickers must be present onsite at the generator and available for review by UD EHS Fire Protection.

#### Pyrotechnics inside of tents:

Pyrotechnics of any kind are not permitted inside of any tent.

#### Fencing around tents:

Fencing may be installed outside of the tent to allow for additional space for guests or for the purposes of identifying the main tent entrance. Any fencing installed outside a tent that has a tent exit going to it must have the same size opening in the fencing that is required for the tent exit opening. Openings in the fencing allows for guests to exit the tent in the event of an emergency.

#### Cooking:

Cooking is not permitted within tents used by the general public or event attendees. Cooking is permitted outside and in the open but must be separated from the tent/inflatable by a minimum of 20'. Propane tanks used for outside cooking must be secured in a way as to prevent the tanks from tipping over. Freestanding propane tanks with no support method are not permitted.

#### Tents used exclusively for cooking:

Tents used for cooking must be approved for that use by the tent vendor. Tents used for cooking must not be used by the public or event guests and must be approved by the UD EHS Fire Protection Office. Cooking tents must be separated from other tents by a minimum of 20'.

#### Combustible vegetation inside of tents:

Combustible vegetation is not permitted inside of any tent

#### Heating of tents:

The heating of the tent by any means must be reviewed by UD EHS Fire Protection and the code requirements will be determined at the time of review.

**Cables on the ground that event participants walk over:**

All cables installed on the ground that tent guests/staff walk over must be installed in an approved cable tray/protector. This is to prevent tripping and damage to cables.