



Introduction:

- This policy gives guidelines for applications to erect temporary or permanent tents at commercial establishments.
- Section 3102 of the Ohio Building Code (OBC) provides requirements for membrane (tent) structures. Section 1301:7-7-24 of the Ohio Fire Code (OFC) also provides requirements for the construction of tent and membrane structures.

Code Requirements and References:

- Tents and membrane structures, for temporary or permanent use, having an area larger than **400 square feet** and **canopies (open on all sides (no sidewalls))**, larger than **700 square feet** require approvals from the building official.
Exceptions are given for the following conditions (i.e. a permit application is not required).
 - Tents used exclusively for **recreational purposes**.
 - Tents open on all sides which comply with all of the following:
 - Individual tents having a maximum size of 700 square feet.
 - The aggregate area of multiple tents placed side by side with a minimum clearance of less than 12 feet, not exceeding 700 square feet.
 - A minimum clearance of 12 feet to all structures and other tents.
- **Height and area limitations for membrane (tent) structures:**
The height and area limitations for membrane structures shall be evaluated in accordance with OBC table 503 and section 506 based on the use group and construction type classifications as specified in OBC chapter 3 and section 3102.3.
 - For tents with **non-combustible (steel, etc.) frames or poles** (2B Construction type) used for **assembly purposes (A-2/A-3/A-4 use group): a single tent or a group of tents with an aggregate area of not more than 9,500 square feet can be applied for under one application for approval.**
 - For tents with **combustible (wood, etc.) frame or poles** (2B Construction type) used for **assembly purposes (A-2/A-3/A-4 use groups): a single tent or a group of tents with an aggregate area of not more than 6,000 square feet can be applied for under one application for approval.**
 - A single tent or group of tents under one permit shall be separated from another tent or group of tents, or other existing structures by a **minimum distance of 20**

feet. Otherwise, the adjacent sides of the tent(s) shall have a **minimum one-hour fire resistance rating.**

- See section 3102 for other requirements for other types of tent structures.

Tent permit approval procedures:

- **Application Form:** Complete and submit the Application for Tent Permit.
- Provide copy of zoning approval with application.
- **Plan submittal requirements:**
 - 1) Submit three (3) sets of construction drawings showing the size of each tent, the location of tents including the distance to property lines, adjacent buildings, structures, or other tents, and construction details of the tent structure(s).
 - 2) Plans shall also include electrical design, cooking equipment, and fire suppression system information if applicable for tents that are intended to have interior lighting, cooking and dining activities.
 - a) For tents housing **cooking activities**, submit drawings for type and layout with dimensions of all cooking appliances, type of exhaust hood and/or hood suppression system, etc., if applicable in accordance with code requirements.
 - b) For tents of **assembly** use purposes **with food/or drink consumption (A-2)**, submit sprinkler system design if the fire area exceeds **5,000 square feet** or the occupant load exceeds **100 people** in the tent or group of tents. **For temporary tents, a “fire watch plan” approved by the local fire jurisdiction may be submitted in lieu of the sprinkler system design.**
 - c) For tents of **assembly** use purposes **without food and/or drink consumption (A-3 or A-4)**, submit sprinkler system design if the fire area exceeds **12,000 square feet** or occupant load exceeds **300 people** in the tent or group of tents. **For temporary tents, a “fire watch plan” approved by the local fire jurisdiction may be submitted in lieu of the sprinkler system design.**
 - 3) Submit certificate(s) for membrane materials meeting the provisions of OBC Section 703.4 or fire propagation performance criteria in **NFPA 701** and the manufactures test protocol.
- Applicant shall be responsible to call for all inspections when the work is ready.