



1281 Hammond Road  
 White Bear Township, MN 55110  
 (651) 747-2750  
 buildingdept@whitebeartownship.org

## Tent Permit Application

In accordance with Minnesota State Fire Code Chapter 31, a permit from the fire code official is required to erect or operate a tent or membrane structures having an area in excess of 400 square feet.

**Exceptions:**

1. Tents/canopies used exclusively for recreational camping purposes.
2. Tents/canopies open on all sides that comply with all of the following:
  - Individual tents/canopies having a maximum size of 700 sq. feet.
  - The aggregate area of multiple tents/canopies placed side by side without a fire break clearance of 12 feet, not exceeding 700 sq. feet total.
  - A minimum clearance of 12 feet to all structures and other tents/canopies

**Instructions:** Return complete application including all required documentation:

- Signed lease, letter of agreement, or email approval (if tent not on property owned by applicant)
- Proof of flame-resistant treatment of tent(s) or membrane structure(s), per NFPA 701.
- Sketch layout of the proposed set-up including:
  - Means of egress, seating arrangements (if applicable), extinguisher placement and location, type of heating and electrical equipment (if applicable).
  - Surrounding structures and approximate distance from the tent/canopy to other tents/canopies and buildings.
  - Distance from streets, roadways, trails and sidewalks.
- Certificate of Insurance: minimum \$300,000 General Liability and \$100,000 Property Damage, naming White Bear Township as the Certificate Holder and, in the description of operations area of the certificate, the address where the permit will be used and the date(s) the tent(s) will be erect.
- Tent permit fee: \$100.00 per tent

**Applicant Information**

Business Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Tent Information**

Company supplying the Tent: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Address of Property where tent will be place: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you the owner of the property?  Yes  No Tent set-up date: \_\_\_\_\_ Tent take down date: \_\_\_\_\_

*Tent Details (attach additional page(s) as needed to describe)*

Quantity: \_\_\_\_\_ length X \_\_\_\_\_ width = \_\_\_\_\_ Total Sq. Ft. # of enclosed sides: \_\_\_\_\_

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Quantity: \_\_\_\_\_ length X \_\_\_\_\_ width = \_\_\_\_\_ Total Sq. Ft. # of enclosed sides: \_\_\_\_\_

**Tax Clearance and Insurance**

Minnesota Statute Chapter 270C, Section 72 requires the licensing authority to provide to the Minnesota Commissioner of Revenue the Minnesota business tax identification number and social security number (or individual tax identification number) of each license applicant. Under the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act and the Federal Privacy Act of 1974, the City is required to advise you of the following regarding the use of this information.

1. This information may be used to deny the issuance of your permit in the event you owe Minnesota sales, employer's withholding or motor vehicle excise taxes;
2. Upon receiving this information, the licensing authority will supply it only to the Minnesota Department of Revenue. However, under the Federal Exchange of Information Agreement, the Department of Revenue may supply this information to the Internal Revenue Service;
3. Failure to supply this information may jeopardize or delay processing of your license or renewal.

Minnesota Tax ID or Social Security Number: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Certificate of Insurance**

Minnesota Statute 176.182 requires local licensing agencies to withhold the issuance or renewal of a license or permit to operate a business in Minnesota until the applicant presents acceptable evidence of compliance with workers' compensation insurance coverage as required pursuant Section 176.181, Subd. 2., and this information will be furnished upon request to the Department of Labor and Industry to ensure compliance with this Statute.

This information is required by law and if not provided, or falsely reported, may result in a \$2,000 penalty assessed against the applicant by the Commissioner of the Department of Labor and Industry.

Must check at least one of these and provide appropriate back-up:

- I carry Worker's Compensation Insurance
- I am Self-Insured
- I am not required to have workers' compensation liability coverage

**Workers' Compensation Coverage**

Name of the insurance company with which you have workers' compensation insurance:

\_\_\_\_\_

Policy Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Dates of Workers' Compensation Coverage: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Acknowledgement**

Under the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act and the Federal Privacy Act of 1974, the Town is required to advise you of the following regarding the use of the information requested herein:

- 1) This information may be used to deny the issuance or renewal of your license in the event you owe Minnesota sales tax, employer's withholding or motor vehicle excise taxes;
- 2) Upon receiving this information, the licensing authority will supply it only to the Minnesota Department of Revenue. However, under the Federal Exchange of Information Agreement, the Minnesota Department of Revenue may supply this information to the Internal Revenue Service;
- 3) Failure to supply this information may jeopardize or delay processing of your license or renewal.

Unless otherwise indicated, the data in this application will be used to approve your license or permit. Upon approval of the license or permit, the information contained in this application shall be deemed public unless classified as private by state law. Private data is available to you and the Town or State who need this

information to perform their duties, but is not available to the public. You are not legally required to provide this data, but the Town may not be able to approve your license or permit if you do not provide it.

Public Notices may contain information relating to Ordinance revisions or updates, which could potentially modify business license fees and requirements.

By applying your electronic signature below, you understand and agree to comply with the applicable codes and standards of the White Bear Township and the State of Minnesota. You declare the information you provided on this application is truthful and you understand that falsification of answers or failure to provide the required data may result in denial of the application.

Applicant's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Temporary Use of Tents

## Current situation (October 2020)

Current COVID-19 restrictions have created a need for some facilities to provide additional spaces outside of the building. Tents and similar membrane structures can be found as restaurant or bar seating, medical facility visiting areas and school classrooms. This information sheet provides guidance for the temporary use of tents and similar structures, and addresses:

- Fabric flammability
- Reducing potential ignition sources
- Location and placement
- Egress
- Operational features

## Definitions: Tents and membrane structures

Tents are constructed of fabric or similar pliable materials. They are typically supported by poles, ropes, light-weight frame, or similar arrangements. Some tents only have a roof covering (like a canopy) while others have a roof covering and sidewalls.

Membrane structures are typically air-inflated or air-supported. Membrane structures may also use cables or light-weight framing to keep the fabric supported. Golf and tennis domes are examples of an air-supported, membrane structure. A “bouncy-house” for children is an example of an air-inflated membrane structure.

## Fire retardant requirements

Minnesota State Fire Code (MSFC) Section 3104 requires that tents and membrane structures be flame resistant. “Flame resistant” does not mean that the material will not burn. Flame resistant materials are somewhat difficult to ignite with a relatively small open flame (like a match or small burner). Materials can be inherently flame resistant or treated with flame retardant products, coatings, or chemicals. Flame resistant materials are not intended to protect against ignition from large open-flame devices (like a furnace or open-flame heater).

## Reducing ignition sources

The MSFC is attempting to eliminate ignition sources inside these structures. For ignition sources outside, the MSFC is trying to separate them by distance to minimize the risk. Here are some common ignition sources and how the MSFC addresses them:

- Smoking is not allowed and NO SMOKING signs are required — MSFC 3107.3.



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- No open flame candles are allowed inside tents; battery-powered candles are allowed — MSFC 3107.4.
- Open flame cooking is not allowed — MSFC 3107.4. Operations involving the warming of food (but not using open flame) that do not pose an ignition risk need to be reviewed by the fire code official — MSFC 3107.12.4.
- Outdoor cooking that produces sparks or grease must be at least 20 feet away — MSFC 3107.12.6.
- Electric generators and similar combustion power sources need to be at least 20 feet from the tent or membrane structure — MSFC 3107.16.

## Heating of tents and membrane structures

Recognizing that tent and membrane structure use in Minnesota requires some form of heating during the cold-climate months, here are some of the restrictions:

- Portable outdoor gas-fired appliances are prohibited — MSFC 603.4.2.1.1 (see photo at right for example).
- Open-flame devices and similar arrangements are not allowed inside of or within 20 feet of tents and membrane structures when they are open to the public — MSFC 3107.4.
- Heating equipment needs to be at least 10 feet from exits or combustible materials (even when not open to the public) — MSFC 3107.12.3.



## Preferred heating methods

The following heating methods are allowed:

- Indirect heat — a heater located outside and a safe distance from the tent where warm air is blown into the tent.
- Electric heat — must be listed by a nationally recognized testing laboratory.
- If open-flame heaters are being used, they should be:
  - 20 feet from the tent (if open to the public) — MSFC 3107.4.
  - 10 feet from exits from the tent — MSFC 3107.12.3.
- If LP gas is the fuel source for the heaters, the following separation distances are required:
  - Containers of 500 gallons or less — 10 feet from the tent.
  - Containers of more than 500 gallons — 25 feet from the tent.



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## Tent and membrane structure location and placement

Tents and membrane structures need to be located and placed so that:

- They are at least 30 feet from combustible vegetation or waste — MSFC 3107.18 and 3107.19.
- They do not block fire lanes or emergency vehicle access to the site — MSFC 3103.8.
- Tents over 15,000 square feet are at least 20 feet from lot lines, buildings, other tents, and vehicles. This distance includes supporting ropes, poles, and guy wires — MSFC 3103.8.2.
- Tents and membrane structures cannot block egress doors from adjacent buildings — MSFC 3105.8 and 3106.3.2.
- Flammable and combustible liquid storage and tanks are at least 50 feet away — MSFC 3107.14.2.
- Refueling using flammable or combustible liquids are at least 20 feet away — MSFC 3107.14.3.
- They are adequately anchored and provide structural stability to withstand the elements of weather without collapse. This includes rain, snow, and wind loads anticipated under expected weather conditions — MSFC 3103.9.

## Means of egress

Each tent or membrane structure should have the following minimum number and width of egress:

Occupant Load	Minimum Number of Means of Egress	Minimum Width of Each – Tents	Minimum Width of Each – Membrane Structures
10-199	2	72 inches	36 inches
200-499	3	72 inches	72 inches
500-999	4	96 inches	72 inches

- Each door or exit must have lighted EXIT signs when there are 50 or more occupants — MSFC 3103.12.6.
- Exit openings:
  - Can be doors that swing outward (direction of exit travel).
  - Are to remain open (if they are an opening in the tent).
  - Openings can be covered with a flame-resistant curtain that slides open and be of a color that contrasts with the color of the tent — MSFC 3103.12.3.
- Egress paths and aisles to be provided and kept clear and unobstructed; maintain widths to a safe area away at least 20 feet from the tent (public way) — MSFC 3103.12.5.1 and 3103.12.8.
- The fire code official can require a seating and site plan — MSFC 3103.6.



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## Operational features

The following operational features are applicable:

- Permit and inspection from the city or governmental agency (if required) — MSFC 3103.2.
- Portable fire extinguishers — MSFC 3107.9.
- Proper use of electrical equipment and extension cords — MSFC 604.
- No hay, straw, shavings, or similar combustible materials are allowed inside tents or membrane structures — MSFC 3107.2.
- Although the MSFC specifies that the maximum allowable use of a temporary tent or membrane structure is 180 days, fire code officials are encouraged to consider the hardships associated with the current COVID-19 pandemic restrictions and balance that time limit with a reasonable level of fire and life safety.

