# Tent Policy & Procedures for Washington University in St. Louis

## Table of Contents

- Tent Policy & Procedures for Washington University in St. Louis .................................................. 1
- Notice ........................................................................................................................................ 2
- Policy/Purpose .......................................................................................................................... 2
- General Information .................................................................................................................. 2
  - Definitions ................................................................................................................................... 2
  - Washington University Group Organizer - WUGO................................................................. 2
  - Campus Jurisdictions .............................................................................................................. 2
  - Overview of Requirements ...................................................................................................... 3
- City of Clayton Tents and Membrane Structure Permit Application ............................................. 4
- City of St. Louis Tents and Membrane Structures Permit Application Process ............................. 5
  - Tents Requiring Permits: ........................................................................................................ 5
  - Tents Not Requiring Permits: ................................................................................................. 5
  - Permit Applications ................................................................................................................ 5
- Special considerations and permits are required for some of the following: ................................. 6
- TENTS AND AIR-supported STRUCTURES APPLICATION ................................................... 7
- TENTS AND MEMBRANE STRUCTURES CODE ........................................................................ 9
Notice

No tents or canopies will be allowed on University properties unless authorized by the appropriate University Departments and all provisions outlined in this policy are met. Events using tents or canopies that do not conform to this policy shall be terminated by campus law enforcement officials, Environmental Health & Safety Office or local fire code officials.

Policy/Purpose

This document provides information and establishes general precautions and policy for individuals or groups that plan to use tent(s) and/or canopies on University property. It provides a single source document of measures required for the safe use of tents and canopies on campus.

General Information

Definitions

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

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% or more of the perimeter.

Washington University Group Organizer - WUGO

The University, Student Group/Organization or Entity Using the Space will submit their request online through WUGO (click here) a minimum of 3 weeks prior to the event. A copy of the signed permit(s), and copy of the flame resistance certificate or affidavit must be provided to the WU EH&S, Occupational Safety Office at least 3 days prior to the event.

Campus Jurisdictions

Medical School Campus – city of St. Louis
Danforth Campus* – city of St. Louis, city of Clayton
North Campus – city of St. Louis
South Campus – city of Clayton
West Campus – city of Clayton

*The majority of Danforth campus falls under the city of Clayton jurisdiction.
Overview of Requirements

- There are different requirements that must be met for tents and canopies which are jurisdiction specific. The majority of the campuses fall in either the jurisdiction of the city of Clayton or the city of St. Louis.
- All tents and canopies having an area in excess of 400 ft² (Clayton) and 1,000 ft² (St. Louis City) require a permit from their respective cities.
- The tent/canopy and decorative materials shall be flame-resistant or treated with a flame-resistant material. A certificate or affidavit of treatment must be submitted with this application.
- Tents/canopies must stay 20 ft. from lot lines, buildings, other temporary membrane structures, other tents and canopies, parked vehicles or internal combustion engines. For the purpose of determining required distances, support ropes and guy wires shall be considered as part of the temporary membrane structure, tent or canopy.
- Exits: Tents/canopies must have at least the minimum number of required exits. Tents/canopies with occupant loads of 50 or more also require exit signs that are either self-luminous or illuminated by internal/external fixtures.
- Open flame or other devices emitting flame, fire or heat or any flammable or combustible liquids, gas, charcoal or other cooking device or any other unapproved devices shall not be permitted inside or located within 20 ft. of the tent/canopy unless approved by the code official.
- No smoking is allowed inside of the tent/canopy. Portable fire extinguishers are required for all tents/canopies. Contact EH&S or fire code official for type needed, number required and placement.
- Aisles and exits must be free and unobstructed during tent/canopy occupancy.
- Hay, straw, shavings or similar combustible materials shall not be located within any tent/canopy containing assembly occupancy, except the materials necessary for the daily feeding and care of animals. Sawdust and shavings utilized for a public performance or exhibit shall not be prohibited provided the sawdust and shavings are kept damp. Combustible materials shall not be permitted under stands or seats at any time. The areas within and adjacent to the tent/canopy, shall be maintained clear of all combustible materials or vegetation that could create a fire hazard within 50 ft. from the structure. Combustible trash shall be removed at least once a day from the structure during the period the structure is occupied by the public.
- All appliances, spotlights, lighting and sound systems shall be powered by electricity and may require a separate electrical permit.
- All tents/canopies shall be adequately roped, braced and anchored to withstand the elements of weather and prevent against collapsing.
Appendix A

City of Clayton Tents and Membrane Structure Permit Application
Please click Here for the Fire Safety Operational Permit Application. For more information about the permit process please contact Kathy Brooks at (314) 290-8485 or by email at kbrooks@claytonmo.gov.
City of St. Louis Tents and Membrane Structures Permit Application Process

Tents Requiring Permits:
- All tents greater than 1,000 sq. feet in total area, including multiple tents attached to each other with an aggregate area greater than 1,000 sq. feet. The erection and maintenance of tents on the same lot shall not exceed a total of 180 days unless a waiver is granted by the Building Code Official.
- All tents, regardless of size, that affect, cover or obstruct any portion of the required means of egress from any building.

Tents Not Requiring Permits:
- Tents Less than 1,000 sq. ft. that do not affect, cover or obstruct any portion of a required means of egress from any building.
- Tents operated 2 ½ days or less by a non-for profit organization and operated on private ground owned by and adjacent to said organizations facilities.
- Tents for private family events that are erected on the same lot with the residence.

Permit Applications
1) Tents requiring permits:
   a) Shall not be erected prior to obtaining a tent permit;
   b) Shall not be operated or occupied prior to inspection and formal approval by the Fire Safety Unit inspector.

2) Formal approval will be issued in the form of:
   a) A “Certificate of Inspection” signed and dated by the Fire Safety Unit inspector and;
   b) An “Occupancy Load Placard” indicating the maximum number of persons allowed in the tent. Both documents shall be posted in a conspicuous, protected location.

3) Apply for tent permits in person in the Building Division – Permit Section, Room 425, City Hall between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Monday-Friday: the office is closed on all City holidays. The cost is $35.00 per tent. Contact the Permit Section for application details: (314) 622-3313.

4) A site plan is required to be submitted with the application, showing the location of the tent(s) in relation to the property lines and buildings(s). The plan shall also show the means of egress (exits)
and the exit path(s) to the street, alley or public way for the tent and for any building affected by the tent. Exit signs, emergency lights, doors and any HVAC for the tent shall be shown on the plans.

5) A notarized letter from the owner is required if the tent is to be located on property not owned by the applicant.

Special considerations and permits are required for some of the following:

- BPS Permit: A Board of Public Service permit is required if tent is to be located on City of St. Louis owned property. (341) 622-4627.
- ADA requirements: Accessibility to tents for people with disabilities shall be maintained at all times. An unobstructed route within and into the tent shall be provided continuously during the use of the tent. For additional information, contact the Commissioner on the disabled, (314) 622-3686.
- Fire Safety: For specific fire safety questions regarding tents, relating to exits, hardware, etc. contact the Fire Safety Unit: (314) 641-8678.
- Propane: The use of propane requires a separate permit from the Fire Marshal’s Office (314) 289-1900.
- Electrical: Permit required. Tents shall not be located under electrical transmission lines unless approved by the Electrical Section. Contact Electrical Inspection Section: (314) 622-3325.

For more information regarding tent requirements in the city of St. Louis please refer to “Building Division Tent Policies for Special Events” found by clicking Here.
TENTS AND AIR SUPPORTED STRUCTURES APPLICATION

This application should be filled in completely, signed, and hand delivered or mailed with a check payable to the City of St. Louis in the amount of $35 per tent over 1,000 sq. feet to:

Permit Section, Building Division
Room 425 City Hall
1200 Market St.
St. Louis, MO 63103

Your application will be processed and the permit mailed to you. Please complete the following:

Address of proposed tent: ____________________________________________________________

Date tent up: ____________________________ Date tent down: _______________________

Owner of lot: ________________________________________________________________

Name: ________________________________________________________________

Address: ________________________________________________________________

Telephone Number: (_____) ________________________________

Occupant of lot: ________________________________________________________________

Name: ________________________________________________________________

Address: ________________________________________________________________

Telephone Number: ________________________________________________________________
I understand that if issued, this will constitute a permit to erect this tent in accord with Ordinance 63703 (Building Code), and Ordinance 63805 (Fire Prevention Code), and not a license to violate any code or ordinance provisions. I have read the above entries and agree that they are correct.

NOTE: If you have multiple tents, list information for each tent on a page attached to this application:

Agreed by:
___________________________________________________

Signature of Agent Accepting Conditions
___________________________________________________

Printed Name of Agent

Name of Company, Firm or Corporation

Company Address

Company City, State, Zip Code

Phone Number

Date

Purpose of Tent: _______________________________________

Size of Tent: x_________ Long x __________ wide x__________ high

Cost of Tent Rental: ____________________________________
TENTS AND MEMBRANE STRUCTURES CODE

All tents and membrane structures erected on Washington University in St. Louis owned property shall comply with section 3101 of the 2015 International Fire Code (IFC), along with any other special requirements of the municipality in which the tent will reside. The below standards are some of the most common occurrences taking from the 2015 IFC.

3103.2 Approval required.
Tents and membrane structures having an area in excess of 400 square feet (37 m²) shall not be erected, operated or maintained for any purpose without first obtaining a permit and approval from the fire code official.

Exceptions:

1. Tents used exclusively for recreational camping purposes.
2. Tents open on all sides which comply with all of the following:
   2.1 Individual tents having a maximum size of 700 square feet (65 m²).
   2.2 The aggregate area of multiple tents placed side by side without a fire break clearance of 12 feet (3658 mm), not exceeding 700 square feet (65 m²) total.
   2.3 A minimum clearance of 12 feet (3658 mm) to all structures and other tents.

3103.5 Use period.
Temporary tents, air-supported, air-inflated or tensioned membrane structures shall not be erected for a period of more than 180 days within a 12-month period on single premises.

3103.8 Access, location and parking.
Access, location and parking for temporary tents and membrane structures shall be in accordance with this section.

3103.8.1 Access.
Fire apparatus access roads shall be provided in accordance with Section 503.

3103.8.2 Location.
Tents or membrane structures shall not be located within 20 feet (6096 mm) of lot lines, buildings, other tents or membrane structures, parked vehicles or internal combustion engines. For the purpose of determining required distances, support ropes and guy wires shall be considered as part of the temporary membrane structure or tent.

Exceptions:
1. Separation distance between membrane structures and tents not used for cooking is not required where the aggregate floor area does not exceed 15,000 square feet (1394 m²).

2. Membrane structures or tents need not be separated from buildings when all of the following conditions are met:
   2.1 The aggregate floor area of the membrane structure or tent shall not exceed 10,000 square feet (929 m²).
   2.2 The aggregate floor area of the building and membrane structure or tent shall not exceed the allowable floor area including increases as indicated in the International Building Code.
   2.3 Required means of egress are provided for both the building and the membrane structure or tent including travel distances.
   2.4 Fire apparatus access roads are provided in accordance with Section 503.

3103.9 Anchorage required.
Tents or membrane structures and their appurtenances shall be adequately roped, braced and anchored to withstand the elements of weather and prevent against collapsing. Documentation of structural stability shall be furnished to the fire code official on request.

3103.11 Seating arrangements.
Seating in tents or membrane structures shall be in accordance with Chapter 10.

3103.12 Means of egress.
Means of egress for temporary tents and membrane structures shall be in accordance with Sections 2403.12.1 through 2403.12.8.

3103.12.1 Distribution.
Exits shall be spaced at approximately equal intervals around the perimeter of the tent or membrane structure, and shall be located such that all points are 100 feet (30 480 mm) or less from an exit.

3103.12.2 Number.
Tents, or membrane structures or a usable portion thereof shall have at least one exit and not less than the number of exits required by Table 2403.12.2. 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 inches (5 mm) per person.
### TABLE 3103.12.2
MINIMUM NUMBER OF MEANS OF EGRESS AND MEANS OF EGRESS WIDTHS FROM TEMPORARY MEMBRANE STRUCTURES AND TENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OCCUPANT LOAD</th>
<th>MINIMUM NUMBER OF MEANS OF EGRESS</th>
<th>MINIMUM WIDTH OF EACH MEANS OF EGRESS (inches)</th>
<th>MINIMUM WIDTH OF EACH MEANS OF EGRESS (inches)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tent</td>
<td>Membrane Structure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 to 199</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200 to 499</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500 to 999</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,000 to 1,999</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,000 to 2,999</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 3,000a</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For SI: 1 inch = 25.4 mm.

a. When the occupant load exceeds 3,000, the total width of means of egress (in inches) shall be not less than the total occupant load multiplied by 0.2 inches per person.

### 3103.12.3 Exit openings from tents.
Exit openings from tents shall remain open unless covered by a flame-resistant curtain. The curtain shall comply with the following requirements:

1. Curtains shall be free sliding on a metal support. The support shall be not less than 80 inches (2032 mm) above the floor level at the exit. The curtains shall be so arranged that, when open, no part of the curtain obstructs the exit.

2. Curtains shall be of a color, or a color, that contrasts with the color of the tent.

### 3103.12.4 Doors.
Exit doors shall swing in the direction of exit travel. To avoid hazardous air and pressure loss in air-supported membrane structures, such doors shall be automatic closing against operating pressures. Opening force at the door edge shall not exceed 15 pounds (66 N).

### 3103.12.5 Aisle.
The width of aisles without fixed seating shall be in accordance with the following:
1. In areas serving employees only, the minimum aisle width shall be 24 inches (610 mm) but not less than the width required by the number of employees served.

2. In public areas, smooth-surfaced, unobstructed aisles having a minimum width of not less than 44 inches (1118 mm) shall be provided from seating areas, and aisles shall be progressively increased in width to provide, at all points, not less than 1 foot (305 mm) of aisle width for each 50 persons served by such aisle at that point.

3103.12.5.1 Arrangement and maintenance.
The arrangement of aisles shall be subject to approval by the fire code official and shall be maintained clear at all times during occupancy.

3103.12.6 Exit signs.
Exits shall be clearly marked. Exit signs shall be installed at required exit doorways and where otherwise necessary to indicate clearly the direction of egress where the exit serves an occupant load of 50 or more.

3103.12.6.1 Exit sign illumination.
Exit signs shall be either listed and labeled in accordance with UL 924 as the internally illuminated type and used in accordance with the listing or shall be externally illuminated by luminaries supplied in the following manner:

1) Two separate circuits, one of which shall be separate from all other circuits, for occupant loads of 300 or less; or

2) Two separate sources of power, one of which shall be an approved emergency system, shall be provided when the occupant load exceeds 300. Emergency systems shall be supplied from storage batteries or from the on-site generator set and the system shall be installed in accordance with NFPA 70. The emergency system provided shall have a minimum duration of 90 minutes when operated at full design demand.

3103.12.7 Means of egress illumination.
Means of egress shall be illuminated with light having an intensity of not less than 1 foot-candle (11 lux) at floor level while the structure is occupied. Fixtures required for means of egress illumination shall be supplied from a separate circuit or source of power.

3103.12.8 Maintenance of means of egress.
The required width of exits, aisles and passageways shall be maintained at all times to a public way. Guy wires, guy ropes and other support members shall not cross a means of egress at a height of less than 8 feet (2438 mm). The surface of means of egress shall be maintained in an approved manner.

3104.2 Flame propagation performance treatment.
Before a permit is granted, the owner or agent shall file with the fire code official a certificate executed by an approved testing laboratory certifying that the tents and membrane structures and their appurtenances; sidewalls, drops and tarpaulins; floor coverings, bunting and combustible decorative materials and effects, including sawdust where used on floors or passageways, are composed of material meeting the flame propagation performance criteria of Test Method 1 or Test Method 2, as appropriate, of NFPA 701 or shall be treated with a flame retardant in an approved manner and meet the flame propagation performance criteria of Test Method 1 or Test Method 2, as appropriate of NFPA 701, and that such flame propagation performance criteria are effective for the period specified by the permit.

3104.3 Label.
Membrane structures or tents shall have a permanently affixed label bearing the identification of size and fabric or material type.

3104.4 Certification.
An affidavit or affirmation shall be submitted to the fire code official and a copy retained on the premises on which the tent or air-supported structure is located. The affidavit shall attest to all of the following information relative to the flame propagation performance criteria of the fabric:

1) Names and address of the owners of the tent or air-supported structure.
2) Date the fabric was last treated with flame-retardant solution.
3) Trade name or kind of chemical used in treatment.
4) Name of person or firm treating the material.
5) Name of testing agency and test standard by which the fabric was tested.

3104.5 Combustible materials.
Hay, straw, shavings or similar combustible materials shall not be located within any tent or membrane structure containing assembly occupancy, except the materials necessary for the daily feeding and care of animals. Sawdust and shavings utilized for a public performance or exhibit shall not be prohibited provided the sawdust and shavings are kept damp. Combustible materials shall not be permitted under stands or seats at any time.

3104.7 Open or exposed flame.
Open flame or other devices emitting flame, fire or heat or any flammable or combustible liquids, gas, charcoal or other cooking device or any other unapproved devices shall not be permitted inside or located within 20 feet (6096 mm) of the tent or membrane structures while open to the public unless approved by the fire code official.

3104.15 Heating and cooking equipment.
Heating and cooking equipment shall be in accordance with Sections 2404.15.1 through 2404.15.7.

### 3104.15.1 Installation.
Heating or cooking equipment, tanks, piping, hoses, fittings, valves, tubing and other related components shall be installed as specified in the International Mechanical Code and the International Fuel Gas Code, and shall be approved by the fire code official.

### 3104.15.2 Venting.
Gas, liquid and solid fuel-burning equipment designed to be vented shall be vented to the outside air as specified in the International Fuel Gas Code and the International Mechanical Code. Such vents shall be equipped with approved spark arresters where required. Where vents or flues are used, all portions of the tent or membrane structure shall be not less than 12 inches (305 mm) from the flue or vent.

### 3104.15.3 Location.
Cooking and heating equipment shall not be located within 10 feet (3048 mm) of exits or combustible materials.

### 3104.15.4 Operations.
Operations such as warming of foods, cooking demonstrations and similar operations that use solid flammables, butane or other similar devices that do not pose an ignition hazard, shall be approved.

### 3104.15.5 Cooking tents.
Tents with sidewalks or drops where cooking is performed shall be separated from other tents or membrane structures by not less than 20 feet (6096 mm).

### 3104.15.6 Outdoor cooking.
Outdoor cooking that produces sparks or grease-laden vapors shall not be performed within 20 feet (6096 mm) of a tent or membrane structure.

### 3104.15.7 Electrical heating and cooking equipment.
Electrical cooking and heating equipment shall comply with NFPA 70.

### 3104.16 LP-gas.
The storage, handling and use of LP-gas and LP-gas equipment shall be in accordance with Sections 2404.16.1 through 2404.16.3.

### 3104.16.1 General.
LP-gas equipment such as tanks, piping, hoses, fittings, valves, tubing and other related components shall be approved and in accordance with Chapter 38 and with the International Fuel Gas Code.
3104.16.2 Location of containers.
LP-gas containers shall be located outside. Safety release valves shall be pointed away from the tent or membrane structure.

3104.16.2.1 Containers 500 gallons or less.
Portable LP-gas containers with a capacity of 500 gallons (1893 L) or less shall have a minimum separation between the container and structure not less than 10 feet (3048 mm).

3104.16.2.2 Containers more than 500 gallons
Portable LP-gas containers with a capacity of more than 500 gallons (1893 L) shall have a minimum separation between the container and structures not less than 25 feet (7620 mm).

3104.16.3 Protection and security.
Portable LP-gas containers, piping, valves and fittings that are located outside and are being used to fuel equipment inside a tent or membrane structure shall be adequately protected to prevent tampering, damage by vehicles or other hazards and shall be located in an approved location. Portable LP-gas containers shall be securely fastened in place to prevent unauthorized movement.

Last Reviewed: 10/2018