

TEMPORARY STRUCTURES

TENTS, MEMBRANE STRUCTURES AND CANOPIES

(When over 180 days, it will be viewed as a Permanent Structure)

Hamilton County Planning and Development, Room 801 County Administration Building (513) 946-4550

I. **WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A TENT, A MEMBRANE STRUCTURE AND A CANOPY?**

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

Membrane-Covered Cable Structure: A non-pressurized structure in which a mast and cable system provides support and tension to the membrane weather barrier and the membrane imparts stability to the structure.

Membrane-Covered Frame Structure: A non-pressurized building wherein the structure is composed of a rigid framework to support a tension membrane which provides the weather barrier.

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.

II. **WHEN IS A BUILDING PERMIT REQUIRED FOR A TENT, MEMBRANE STRUCTURE OR CANOPY? ARE THERE ANY EXCEPTIONS TO THE NEED OF A PERMIT?**

The *Ohio Building Code* contains regulations governing the erection of tents and membrane structures larger than 200 square feet and canopies exceeding 400 square feet. Therefore, a building permit shall be secured before erecting a tent, membrane structure or canopy exceeding these limitations. *Canopies which are open on all sides and comply with all of the following conditions do not require permits:*

1. Individual canopies having a maximum size of 700 square feet,
2. The aggregate area of multiple canopies placed side by side with a minimum clearance of less than 12 feet, not exceeding 700 square feet and
3. A minimum clearance of 12 feet to all structures and other tents.

Tents, membrane structures and canopies are temporary structures and are limited to 180 days of use.

III. **WHAT CODES/REGULATIONS ARE APPLICABLE?**

All work performed must be in accordance with the *Ohio Building Code*, the *International Fire Code*, the *Hamilton County Building Code*, the *Hamilton County Zoning Resolution*, and all other applicable laws and ordinances.

Contact the following agencies:

Hamilton County Department of Building Inspections	(513) 946-4550
Hamilton County Zoning Department (or local township zoning administrator)	(513) 946-4501
Applicable Fire Department	

IV. **HOW DO I OBTAIN A PERMIT?**

NOTE: The Zoning Certificate must accompany the permit application.

Complete an application for a building permit and submit four copies of the site plan and four copies of erection plans for review to the Department of Building Inspections, 138 E. Court Street, Room 803, Cincinnati, Ohio 45202. Surveys and/or plot plans must be prepared and sealed by an Ohio registered surveyor. Building plans must be prepared and properly sealed by an Ohio registered Architect or Professional Engineer. All design professionals must properly seal the plans which they are responsible for. A non-refundable plan processing fee must be paid at the time of application. Contact a Building Department Permit Specialist prior to submitting.

NOTE: Filing of an application for a tent permit does not constitute permission to begin the erection of the tent.

An acceptable set of plans should include the following:

- A. All pages and data properly sealed by the appropriate design professional (as necessary).
- B. Plot Plan - Drawn to scale showing:
 - 1. Property lines with dimensions.
 - 2. All existing and proposed structures with dimensions.
 - 3. Twenty (20) ft. minimum distance between tents and all other structures and property lines (free from guy ropes and stakes).
 - 4. Distance between tent stakes (and guy ropes) and all other structures (20 ft. minimum).
 - 5. Name and address of property owner.
 - 6. Name and address of owner of temporary structure.
- C. Building Plans - Drawn to scale showing (1/8" = 1'-0" min.)
 - 1. Intended use, the type of construction and the occupant load of each tent.
 - 2. NFPA 701 documentation (tents - fabric flame resistance certificate).
 - 3. A dimensioned seating and furniture layout.
 - 4. Dimensioned aisle widths and paths of travel.
 - 5. Exit lights & emergency lights (indicate if the tents have enclosing side flaps or walls).
 - 6. Dates and times of occupancy.
 - 7. Erection and dismantling dates.
 - 8. Anchoring information with the minimum applied live loads shown (wind & snow).

NOTE: Tents, membrane structures and canopies erected for a period exceeding 180 days shall be reviewed as permanent structures and shall meet all of the applicable requirements of the *Ohio Building Code* and *Hamilton County Zoning Resolution* (or applicable township zoning code).

V. **WHAT HAPPENS AFTER I APPLY FOR MY PERMIT?**

The aforementioned agencies will review the application. If any of the agencies have questions or comments, they will contact the applicant (the person who signed the application form). Corrected plans must be approved within 60 days. Upon receipt of the necessary approvals, a Building Department Permit Specialist will notify the applicant that the permit is ready and any additional fees that may be due.

VI. **WHAT IS REQUIRED AFTER THE PERMIT IS ISSUED?**

All tents, membrane structures and canopies shall be erected in accordance with the approved plans, the *Ohio Building Code*, the *Hamilton County Building Code*, the *Hamilton County Zoning Resolution*, the local Fire Department, and other applicable ordinances. The permit will expire after the date stated for dismantling of the tent.

VII. **INSPECTIONS REQUIRED (24 hour minimum notice)**

Hamilton County Department of Building Inspections	(513) 946-3780
Hamilton County Zoning Department (or applicable township zoning administrator)	(513) 946-4501
Applicable Fire Department	

NOTE: Contact the Department of Building Inspections at 946-4550 if the date of erection changes.