



**Alameda County Fire Department  
Bureau of Fire Prevention**

**INFORMATIONAL BULLETIN**

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## **FIRE CODE REQUIREMENTS FOR CARNIVALS AND FAIRS**

This Informational Bulletin has been developed by the Alameda County Fire Department to summarize the fire and life safety regulations relating to temporary carnivals, fairs and structures used for booths and concession stands. For Tents and Canopies see Fire Prevention Informational Bulletin - Tent.

**Definitions:**   **Carnival** - A mobile enterprise principally devoted to offering amusement or entertainment to the public in, upon or by means of portable amusement rides or temporary structures.

**Fair** - An enterprise principally devoted to the exhibition of products in connection with the operation of amusement rides or concession booths.

### **Fire Code Regulations:**

1. A Fire Department permit is required for all carnivals and street fairs. Additional permits may be required for booths or spaces using cooking, heat or flame producing equipment. Safety inspections will be conducted by the Fire Department during operation. (2007 CFC 105.6.4 Appendix)
2. Fire apparatus access roads shall be provided throughout the event. Access roads are a minimum 20-foot wide. Utility services to booths and stands shall be so located that they do not create a hazard. It is preferred that they be run to the rear of booths and stands when practical. Site plans shall be submitted to the Fire Prevention Bureau for review prior to the event. (2007 CFC 503.2)
3. Access to fire hydrants and surrounding structures shall be maintained. Fire hydrant, automatic fire sprinkler system connections and access roads should be identified on the site plan. The minimum clearance to a fire hydrant or fire department connection (FDC) shall be 7.5 feet from the center of the hydrant or FDC for a total of 15' of curb face. Extended carnivals or street fairs may require additional clearance. (2007 CFC 508.5.4)

### **Concession Stands, Booths and Spaces:**

1. Spacing requirements are based upon the activity of each concession stand, booth or space. The following guidelines shall be followed. (2007 UBC 3103)
  - a. Concession stands, booths, and spaces with no open flame and/or heat producing devices may be placed side by side providing that the aggregate square footage does not exceed 15,000 sq. ft. Each grouping shall be separated by a minimum of a 20 feet
  - b. Concession stands, booths, and spaces with approved limited cooking may be placed side by side providing that the aggregate square footage does not exceed 3,000 sq. ft. Each grouping shall be separated by a minimum of 20 feet.
  - c. Concession stands, booths, and spaces associated with barbecues, deep fat frying, and open flame cooking may be placed side by side providing the aggregate square footage does not exceed 200 sq. ft. Cooking appliances shall be outside and separated a minimum of 10 feet from the closest concession stand, booth, or space. Each grouping shall be separated by a minimum of 20 feet.

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2. When aggregate total of booths exceeds 200 sq. ft., a separation of 12 feet must be maintained between booths and structures, vehicles or property lines.
3. Booths shall not be located within 10 feet of amusement rides or devices. (2007 UBC 3103)
4. All fabric or membrane covered booths must be certified flame retardant and have a State Fire Marshal seal attached.
5. All decorative material shall be treated “fire resistive” or inherently fire resistive. Certification documentation is required.
6. Booths shall have assignment numbers posted at the front of each booth for identification. The number shall be readily visible.
7. Each booth shall have a minimum of one 30” wide by 6’8” high exit way.

### **Fire Extinguishers:**

1. Fire Extinguisher layout of non-food booths shall be determined upon submittal of site layout plan.
2. Booths with cooking shall provide a minimum 40-BC rated fire extinguisher. If cooking activity is located outside booth, the 40BC extinguisher shall be in addition to the 2A10BC required above. All extinguishers shall be certified for year of use and have a current State Fire Marshal certification tag attached.
3. All extinguishers shall be visible and accessible at all times, preferably mounted near a point of egress.
4. When a generator is used, one 40BC fire extinguisher must be located within 50 feet of the generator’s location and it must be readily accessible.

### **Cooking Equipment:**

1. All flammable liquid/gas fueled appliances shall be equipped with an accessible on/off valve.
2. Flammable liquid/gas fueled appliances shall have the fuel capacity to operate for the entire day. Refueling in the booth or space is prohibited.
3. Spare compressed gas cylinders shall be limited to one 20lb cylinder for each cooking appliance. Spare tanks shall not be stored in the booth.
4. All compressed cylinders shall be secured in an upright position. Turn off cylinders when not in use.
5. The testing of all connections of pressurized supply lines must be conducted using a soapy water solution.
6. Fuel supply lines shall be in good condition without splices, deterioration or damage. All fuel lines shall be approved for the intended use and pressure regulator shall be attached to pressurized lines.
7. Barbecues, deep fat cooking, flambé or open flame cooking shall be conducted outside of the booth. Cooking appliances shall be located a minimum of 10 feet from the outside of the booth or any covered space. Clearances for fire lanes and from structures must be maintained.

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8. Limited cooking using small cook top type stoves (Coleman type stoves) and food warming devices may be used inside of booths. All cooking pans must have lids available. The authority having jurisdiction shall evaluate other cooking appliances. (2007 CFC 308.5.2)
9. Permitted cooking in booths shall be on sturdy not readily combustible tables and separated from all readily combustible materials by a minimum of 18 inches.

### **Charcoal Cooking:**

1. Fires used for preparation of food shall be limited to clean fire wood or commercially produced briquettes.
2. Fires shall be maintained within a barbecue or other similar device at all times. The device shall be located a minimum of 10 feet outside the booth or covered space. The device shall not be placed within the fire apparatus access roadway or a public access way. (2007 CFC 308.3.1)
3. All fires shall be constantly attended and extinguished when no longer needed. (2007 CFC 307.5)
4. Only electrical starter or charcoal lighter fuels are permitted to start fires. Fuel may not be stored in booth.

### **Electrical Equipment:**

1. Electrical equipment and installations shall comply with the Electrical Code. (2007 CFC 605.4 through 605.9 & 2404.15.7))
  - Extension cords shall be U.L. listed for their use, located so they do not present a tripping hazard and are placed out of foot traffic areas. Secure cords as necessary with tape or ties.
  - Cords must be plugged directly into an approved receptacle and shall serve only one appliance.
  - The current capacity of the cord in amperes shall not be less than the rated capacity of the appliance or fixture and the cord. (recommended minimum of 12 AWG extension cords be used minimum)
  - Extension and appliance cords shall be in good condition without splices, deterioration or damage.
  - Extension and appliance cords shall be of the grounded type when serving grounded appliances or fixtures.
  - Extension cords may not be run in series.

### **Generator use:**

1. Generators shall be isolated from contact with the public by physical barrier. (2007 CFC 2404.19)
2. Generators shall have the fuel capacity to operate uninterrupted for the event operating hours. If refueling is required, the generator must shut down and cooled. (2007 CFC 2404.18.5.2)
3. Contact the Building Department to obtain permits (if applicable) and grounding requirements.
4. All cords from generators must not create a tripping hazard or cross fire lanes unprotected. (2007 CFC 605.5)

**House Keeping and General Fire Safety Requirements**

1. Flammable and combustible liquids and LP-gas shall not be stored in or within 50 feet of tents and canopies. (2007 CFC 2404.17.2)
2. All weeds, combustible vegetation, trash and combustible storage shall be removed from areas adjacent to and within 30 feet of tents and canopies. Floor surfaces inside and within 30 feet of canopies shall be kept free and clear of combustible waste. (2007 CFC 2404.21)
3. Gas, solid or liquid-fuel-burning equipment shall be vented to the exterior by means of an approved flue or vent. A 12-inch clearance shall be maintained between the flue or vent and all tent material. Solid-fuel-burning equipment shall be provided with an approved spark arrestor having openings not exceeding ¼ inch wire mesh. (2007 CFC 2404.15.2)
4. Fire extinguishers with a minimum rating of 2A-10BC shall be provided as follows: one extinguisher for tents and canopies up to 500 square feet in floor area, two extinguishers for 501 to 1,000 square feet and one extinguisher for each additional 2,000 square feet of floor area or fraction thereof. (2007 CFC 2404.13)
5. Smoking is prohibited in tents and canopies. Approved NO SMOKING signs shall be posted. The use of open flame devices such as candles is prohibited in tents and canopies. (CFC 2404.6 & 7)
6. Rubbish containers shall not exceed 40 gallons unless they are constructed of noncombustible materials. Rubbish containers in excess of 40 gallons shall also be provided with noncombustible lids. (2007 CFC 304.3.2)
7. Dumpsters in excess of 1.5 cubic yards with tight fitting noncombustible lids shall be kept a minimum of five feet from booths or stands. All other dumpsters shall be kept a minimum of 30 feet from booths or stands. (2007 CFC 2404.22 & 304.3.3)

*If you have any questions or wish to apply for a permit for a carnival, fair or to erect a tent or canopy, please contact the Fire Prevention Division for your area.*

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