

TEMPORARY TENTS AND OTHER MEMBRANE STRUCTURES

Montgomery County Building Regulations
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PROJECT SUCCESS CHECKLIST

Permits and inspections are required for most temporary tents and membrane structures, in place for no more than 180 days. Complying with State and local codes helps ensure you and your community will have a safe, sanitary event, and allow effective emergency personnel access if needed. To ensure timely approval and inspection, this guide explains what needs to be submitted, to whom, and what needs to be inspected, by whom, and in what sequence.

Please submit documents a minimum of 30 days prior to the event.

This will allow adequate time for review by the building and fire departments and time for the applicant to respond to any comments and questions by the building and fire departments.



Failure during an event is no fun.

Apply online at [Montgomery County Business Services Building Regulations \(selectmcoho.com\)](https://selectmcoho.com)

WHO'S INVOLVED

You will need approvals from some or all of the following:

- **The Zoning Department** – looks at structure location, access, and parking issues
- **The Building Department** – looks at structural, electrical and life safety issues
- **The Fire Department** – looks at access, fire safety and emergency response concerns
- **The Health Department** - looks at sanitation and food service safety

You can find out who to contact in each jurisdiction in Montgomery County at our website:

<https://www.selectmcoho.com/building/contact-us-and-partner-agencies>

WHAT'S COVERED, AND WHAT'S EXEMPT

Zoning Department requirements for temporary tents vary widely. You must check with your local zoning department for their requirements. Zoning must be approved before applying for permits.

Building Department approval is required for tents larger than 400 square feet in area, or an occupant load greater than 10 with a few exceptions:

- Reference 2024 Ohio Building Code, Section 3103 for specific code requirements.
- Tents used for recreational camping are exempt.
- Tents up to 700 square feet in area, which are open on all sides, i.e. no side flaps are installed, and located at least 12 feet away from other tents or buildings, are also exempt.
- Temporary tents erected for private, non-commercial uses (such as for graduations or family reunions) on one, two or three family properties that also have a dwelling on them are exempt.

Fire Departments often have additional requirements. Contact your local department for additional information and specific requirements.

Health Department approval is required whenever food is being sold to the public. See Temporary Food Service Packet.

The following checklists will help you successfully navigate these agencies to ensure safe approval of these temporary structures for your event:

WHAT REQUIRED TO BE SUBMITTED FOR APPROVAL

- All documents submitted shall bear the name of the person responsible for preparing the drawings.
- Zoning
 - Obtain approval from the local zoning department, then submit your temporary tent application to the building department, who will share it with the fire department.
- Site Plan
 - Site plan showing the tent(s), property lines, existing buildings, north arrow, parking layout, fire lanes. Indicate distances from property lines and adjacent buildings. Site plan can be an aerial map from the Montgomery County Auditor's GIS home page of a legible copy of a Google Maps aerial photograph.
- Floor Plan
 - Provide a detailed floor plan of the tent if the occupant load is proposed to exceed 50 people. Show raised platforms, dance floors, furnishings, aisle ways, exits, exit signage and emergency lights. Note the maximum travel distance to an exit cannot exceed 100 feet.
 - Identify the proposed use and the number of occupants that will be under the tent.
 - If raised platforms are to be installed, structural design information for them is required.
 - Identify the type and location of all anchorage ropes, stakes, or weighted anchors. Note the 12-foot separation distance is measured from the outside edge of such anchorage. Large tents may require engineer-sealed anchorage designs.
- Fire Safety
 - Submit public safety plan stating the individual responsible for shutting down the event in case of an emergency.
 - Provide manufacturers' flame spread information for all fabric coverings.
- Electrical and HVAC
 - If electrical equipment, lighting, or generators are to be installed, indicate what is proposed, and where.
 - If tents are to be heated, show method and equipment. Note, open flames are not permitted under tents.
- Food Service
 - If food sales are offered, you must also contact the health department for approval.
 - Show all proposed food service equipment, and indicate the heat source, i.e. electric, charcoal, gas, etc.

WHAT NEEDS TO BE INSPECTED, AND BY WHOM

Z = Zoning Inspection B = Building Inspection F = Fire Inspection H = Health Inspection

- Location per approved plans – Z, B, F
- Flame spread certification on each panel of tent membrane (both roofs and side walls) - B
- Method of anchoring and protection - B
- Location of exit signs and emergency lights – B, F
- Layout of furnishings – B, F
- Electric work – B
- Temporary heating equipment – B, F
- Temporary fuel sources, including location and how they are secured - F
- Type, size, and location of fire extinguishers – F
- Cooking facilities – F, H
- Posting of no smoking signs – F, H
- Other fire department requirements - F
- Food service operations – H