

Forming part of a Building Permit for Tents

**“Tent” refers to a temporary shelter that is used at an open-air event such as a fair or exhibition, and includes a canopy, marquee, sunshade, etc. In accordance with Section 8. of the Building Code Act, a building permit is required for the installation of a tent.**

**Exemption:** A tent or a group of tents is exempt from the requirement to obtain a building permit provided that the tent or group of tents is:

1. not more than 60 m<sup>2</sup> (646 ft<sup>2</sup>) in aggregate ground area,
2. not attached to a building, and
3. constructed more than 3 m from other structures.

**General Requirements** for tents not exempt from the requirement to obtain a building permit are listed in Section 3.14. (“Tents and Air Supported Structures”), Div. B. of the 2012 Ontario Building Code (OBC).

The following requirements are applicable to all tents that require building permits:

- a) Clearances to Other Structures and to Flammable Material: Tents shall not be erected closer than 3 m (9'-10") to the property line. The ground enclosed by the tent, and for a distance of 3 m (9'-10") around the tent, shall be cleared of all flammable or combustible material or vegetation that will carry fire. Tents shall not be erected closer than 3 m (9'-10") to other tents or structures on the same property except:
  - tents not occupied by the public need not be separated from one another and are permitted to be erected less than 3 m (9'-10") from other structures on the same property, where such closer spacing does not create a hazard to the public;
  - tents located on fair grounds or similar open space need not be separated from one another provided such closer spacing does not create a hazard to the public.
- b) Flame Resistance: Tent material must bear a label confirming compliance with the provisions of CAN/ULC S-109-03, “Flame Tests of Flame-Resistant Fabrics and Films”, or NFPA 701-2010, “Fire Tests for Flame Propagation of Textiles and Films”.
- c) Provisions for Firefighting: Access must be provided to all tents for the purpose of firefighting.
- d) Electrical systems: Electrical systems and equipment in a tent must be inaccessible to the public. Cables on the ground in areas used by the public in a tent shall be placed in trenches or protected by covers to prevent damage from traffic.
- e) Design of Framing and Support: Tents supporting structure and anchorage system have to be designed to support the loads as per the OBC (including the area snow loads, when applicable).

In addition to the above listed requirements, tents that

1. exceed 225 m<sup>2</sup> (2,420 ft<sup>2</sup>) in ground area,
2. do not exceed 225m<sup>2</sup> in aggregate ground area and are closer than 3 m (9'-10")

- apart;
3. contain bleachers, and
  4. are enclosed with sidewalls must also comply with the following requirements:
- f) **Means of Egress:** Tents must conform to the requirements of the OBC, Div. B., Section 3.3. (Safety within Floor Areas), and Section 3.4. (Requirements for Exits). Where the area between adjacent tents or a tent and the property line is used as a means of egress, the minimum width between stake lines shall be the width necessary for means of egress but not be less than 3m.
- g) **Bleachers:** Where bleachers are provided in tents, they shall be designed in accordance with the provisions of the OBC, DIV B, (Articles 3.3.2.8., 3.3.2.10 and Subsection 4.1.5).
- h) **Sanitary Facilities:** Minimum number of water closets for tents must be determined in accordance with OBC, DIV. B, Table 3.7.4.3.E. If portable privies are used, they must comply with the requirements of DIV. B, Part 8 of the OBC.

**Professional Design and General Review:** A supporting framing structure and anchorage system for a tent occupying an area greater than 225 m<sup>2</sup> must be designed and reviewed by a professional engineer licensed to practice in the province of Ontario.

**Fire Department Requirements:** Where required, provide portable fire extinguishers, smoking prohibiting signs, etc., to the satisfaction of the Halton Hills Fire Department.

**Occupancy:** Prior to occupying a tent, the Applicant/Owner must arrange for (occupancy) inspections by both the Building Services and Fire Department staff.

**Installation and Maintenance:** It is the responsibility of the Applicant/Owner to ensure that the tent supporting structure and anchorage system are installed in accordance with the manufacturer's installation instructions; it is the ongoing responsibility of the Applicant/Owner to ensure that said supporting system and anchoring system are maintained accordingly.

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Building Services - Tent Permits:	905-873-2600 Ext. 2924
Building Services - Inspections:	905-873-2600 Ext. 2922

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