



## Exterior Event and Tent/Canopy Guidance Document

This package is intended to serve as a general reference document; to provide guidelines and identify code requirements concerning various exterior events and occasions. It is designed to address the most frequently occurring and applicable codes and standards and is not all inclusive of every possible requirement. For additional information please contact the Nashua City Clerk's Office, Fire Marshal's Office, Nashua Public Works, The Department of Building Safety and/or the Nashua Police Department.

### Definitions

**AHJ** – The authority having jurisdiction (AHJ) is that person or office charged with enforcing the applicable codes or ordinances of the City of Nashua. In most situations, it is the fire chief, fire marshal, building official, health officer, police chief or department designee.

**Canopy** – A temporary structure, enclosure, or shelter constructed of pliable materials which is open without sidewalls or drops on less than 75% or more of the perimeter.

**Certificate of Flame Resistance** – A certificate or affidavit that states the material has been treated in accordance with NFPA 701.

**Cube Tap** – A grounded U/L listed adapter that converts one female connector into multiple female connectors.

**Event** – Any public assembly on public land or open to the public on private land (other than owner occupied one or two-family residential dwellings) within a tent, canopy, structure etc. including but not limited to luncheons, dinners, carnivals, fairs, political rallies, performances, graduations. Any events held in an area, space or structure used outside of its normal function or existing permitted use (for example, a tennis court or courts for a stage, seating area, trade show, or exhibition) and open to the public shall be considered a special event. (*The Final Determination is made by the local AHJ or Designee.*)

**Flame Retardant** – An approved chemical compound or mixture which, when applied in an approved manner to any fabric or material, will render such fabric or material incapable of supporting combustion.

**Power distribution strip** – A grounded electricity distribution device containing overload protection that turns one AC wall outlet into several.

**Splitter or "Y" Tap** – A grounded U/L listed adapter in the form of a letter "Y", having two female cord connectors on one end and a male plug at the other end.

**Tent** – A temporary structure, enclosure, or shelter, with sidewalls on more than 75% or more of the perimeter, constructed of fabric or pliable material.

**Triple or "W" Tap** – A grounded U/L listed adapter in the form of a letter "W", having three female cord connectors on one end and a male plug at the other end.

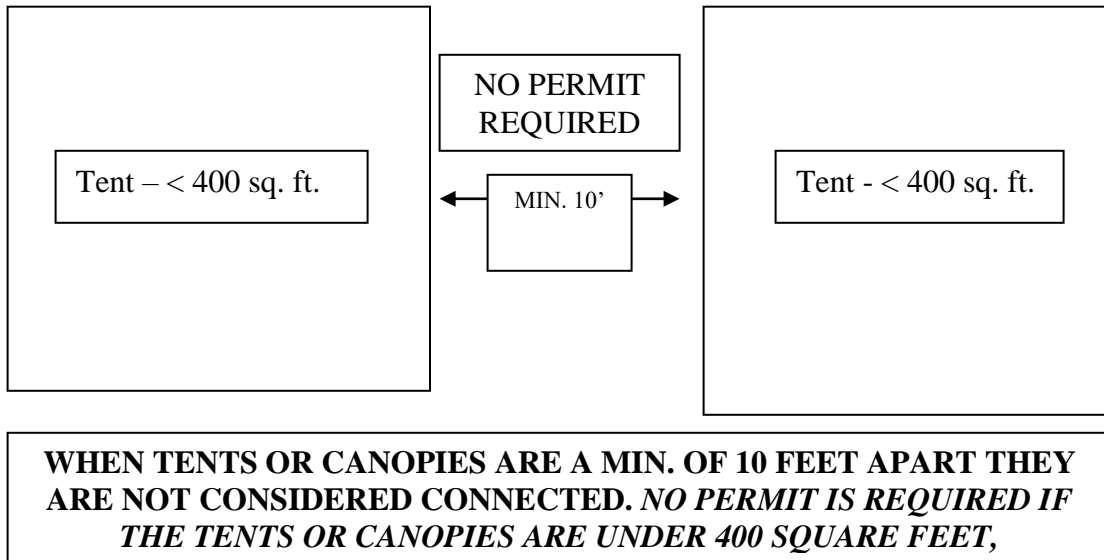
**Exterior Event Tent/Canopy**

- A. **Permit Required. (Subject to applicable permit fees)** A **Land Use/Building Permit** shall be obtained from the Department of Building Safety for all tents, temporary membrane structures and membrane canopies **400 square feet and larger**.
  - a. *Tents of any size erected as a temporary accessory structure for private events on property that is an owner-occupied, one or 2-family dwelling are excluded.*
- B. Written permission by the property owner, if different then the event organizer must be provided to the Department of Building Safety for permit issuance.
- C. Applicants for all tents or canopies requiring a permit must submit a certificate of flame resistance.
- D. Applicants for all tents or canopies requiring a permit must submit a diagram, from the tent or canopy provider, identifying the method and locations of anchoring to be utilized (stakes or ballast).
- E. Applicants for all tents or canopies requiring a permit must submit an emergency weather and evacuation plan that identifies who and how weather will be monitored and defines the evacuation plan for predicted winds exceeding 20 miles per hour (mph).
  - a. *Tents or canopies provided with engineered wind loading documentation may be exempted from this requirement.*
- F. For venues hosting seasonal special events, only one (1) permit application shall be required.
  - a. *Tents/canopies or temporary membrane structures erected for extended seasonal uses from **November 15 through May 15** must also comply with the ground snow load requirements of the building code.*
- G. A Land Use / Building permit is not required for tents or canopies less than four hundred (400) square feet in size.
- H. All enclosed tents or enclosed temporary membrane structures shall be equipped with emergency lights and exit signs.
- I. Tents or temporary membrane structures shall be erected in accordance with the manufactures specifications or The IFAI procedural handbook for the safe installation of tentage second edition.
- J. It is the applicant’s responsibility to discontinue the use of the tent or temporary membrane structure in the event of severe weather.
- K. Tents or temporary membrane structures erected for extended seasonal uses from **November 15 through May 15** must also comply with the ground snow load requirements of the building code.
- L. Means of egress requirements for enclosed tents or membrane structures shall be as follows:

<u>Occupant load</u>	<u>Number of exits</u>	<u>Minimum exit width</u>
Less than 10	1	36”
10 to 199	2	72”
200 to 499	3	72”

500 to 999	4	96"
1000 or more	5	120"

- M. If two (2) or more exits are provided, illuminated exit signs and emergency lighting shall be provided.
- N. Tents less than 400 square feet but erected with less than ten feet separation between each tent may be calculated as cumulative.
- O. Tents and canopies that are at least ten (10) feet apart are not considered connected.



**Electrical (If Applicable).**

- A. All electrical installations shall meet the requirements of the most current adopted edition of the National Electrical Code (NFPA 70).
- B. Temporary event specific electrical installations shall comply with the most current adopted edition of the National Electrical Code (NFPA 70).
- C. When applicable, the electrician of record or the event coordinator shall supply a wiring plan that shall include portable power distribution panel location(s), flexible cord locations and lengths, and locations of multi-appliance distribution centers.
- D. GFCI (Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter) protection shall be provided for all exterior locations or when otherwise applicable in accordance with the National Electrical Code.
- E. All extension cords shall be appropriately sized for the intended use.
- F. All extension cords that are run within a means of egress or public way shall be secured and protected using an approved means, such as treadle, “yellow jackets”, or trenches.
- G. Extension cords shall serve only one appliance or fixture, unless appropriately sized and in conjunction with an approved multi-appliance distribution center with overload protection. The current capacity of the supply cord shall be not less than the rated capacity of the appliance(s) or fixture(s).

- H. Only UL-listed overload protected power distribution strips may be used for additional outlets.
- I. Power distribution strips connected in series “daisy-chained” are prohibited.
- J. Cube Taps, “Y” Taps &”W” Taps are permitted, when approved by Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ), to supply electricity to a maximum of 3 electronic appliances and when connected directly or by a single extension cord to an approved power distribution strip. The combined amperage usage shall not exceed the rating of the tap adapter, extension cord or power distribution strip.
- K. Portable generators shall be locate five (5) feet or greater from booths, trailers, tents, and canopies.

**The Department of Building Safety reserves the right to update this guideline document as necessary and without prior notice.**