

Temporary Structure Permit Guide

Version	Date	Comments
1	March, 2009	Initial <i>Tent (Temporary Structure) Permit Guide</i>
2	February, 2012	Updated permit requirements, application, and equipment
3	April, 2013	Routine review, addition of portable tent heaters
4	June, 2015	Update code citation - SFPC 2012

A. INTRODUCTION

Commonwealth of Virginia regulations and this university guidance document require inspection and/or permitting of all temporary structures to include tents, stages, and amusement devices erected on university property. Depending on the type and size of the temporary structure, a written permit may be required by the university or the Commonwealth of Virginia. The type and size of the temporary structure will also determine how many days prior to the erection of the device a *Temporary Structure Permit Application* is required to be submitted to the Environmental Health and Safety Office (EHS).

B. SCOPE

This Guide applies to all George Mason University employees and departments that use, erect, contract to erect, or oversee the installation of temporary structures on university property. All temporary structures erected on George Mason University property must be maintained in such a way that they do not pose a safety hazard. Events that are utilizing temporary structures must reserve the space that they are using through Events Management 25 Live registration system.

C. TENTS

The square footage of the tent will determine the process that the Event Coordinator must observe. For the purpose of calculating size, support ropes, guy wires, water barrels, or any device attached to the tent shall be considered part of the tent. Tents that are erected side by side must have their individual areas added together for the purposes of these guidelines. Tents must be separated by at least 20 feet in order to be considered separate tents. The time requirements for the *Temporary Structure Permit Application* submission must be followed in order to issue or facilitate the issuing of permits. The earlier the *Temporary Structure Permit Application* is submitted the easier it will be to address issues that might arise.

Tents Size:

- **100 to 200 square feet (NO Permit Required):** The Event Coordinator must follow the applicable minimum requirements (see below) when using and assembling the tent.
- **200 to 400 square feet (NO Permit Required):** The Event Coordinator must notify EHS by phone 703-993-8448 or email safety@gmu.edu five business days prior to a planned event to request a safety inspection. EHS will conduct a safety inspection at least two hours prior to utilizing the tent.
- **400 to 900 square feet (Permit Required):** The Event Coordinator must submit a *Temporary Structure Permit Application* to EHS no later than 10 business days prior to the event. The Event Coordinator must have a valid permit and have a safety inspection conducted by EHS no later than two hours prior to utilizing the tent.
- **Greater than 900 square feet OR having more than 50 occupants (Permit Required):** The Event Coordinator must submit a *Temporary Structure Permit Application* to EHS no later than 15 days prior to the event. The Event Coordinator must have a valid permit and have a safety inspection conducted by EHS no later than two hours prior to utilizing the tent.

Minimum Requirements: All tents, regardless of size must comply with the following:

- Be placed at least 20 feet from the exterior of surrounding buildings.
- Not block:
 - Any means of ingress or egress of other structures,
 - Emergency fire lanes, and
 - Any equipment that pertains or aids in the suppression of a fire (e.g., fire hydrant, fire department connection, or post indicator valve).
- Open flames or cooking devices may not be used under tents. All cooking appliances or open flames to include grills may not be used within 20 feet of a tent.
- May not be occupied when local winds are forecasted or known to be greater than 40 miles per hour.
- All tents are subject to removal by the Event Coordinator, EHS, Facilities Management, or vendor due to severe weather.
- Provide adequate clear paths for egress/exiting.
- Maintain a copy of the Tent Permit (if required) on-site.
- Have original manufacture's tags attached indicating that the material of the tent is flame retardant (if tent is 400 square feet or greater).
- Tents may only be occupied during daylight, unless code compliant electrical lighting is provided.
- Properly marked and lighted emergency exits (for tents with sidewalls and 900 square feet or greater).
- Additional regulations may be stipulated in the permit issued by the Commonwealth.

Tent Permit Application Process: Tents that are erected without an application, associated documentation, and/or permit are prohibited from being occupied and subject to removal. A complete *Temporary Structure Permit Application* package includes:

- *Temporary Structure Permit Application* available on the EHS website.
- George Mason University campus map indication the location of the event.
- Detailed site plan, including method of tie-down and /or anchorage and location of surrounding buildings or structures.
- Detailed floor plan with egress and exits shown (for tents with sidewalls), and furniture/equipment arrangement.
- Certificate of flame resistance (only for tents over 400 square feet).
- Miss Utility (811 or 1-800-552-7001) and Facilities Management Customer Service Center have been contacted and all utilities are marked (only for tents that require stakes to be used for anchoring).

Submit completed applications to EHS (see section F). If the application is approved, a permit will be issued to the Event Coordinator.

Fire Extinguishers: A certified fire extinguisher of appropriate size and type is required to be available within 75 feet of any point within a tent. The number of fire extinguishers is dependent on the size of the tent that is being used. See *Table 1, Quantity of Fire Extinguishers Required* for further details.

Table 1: Quantity of Fire Extinguishers Required

Tent Size (sq ft.)	Minimum Number of 5 pound ABC Extinguishers
< 200	One is recommended but not required
201-400	1
401-600	2
601-800	3
>800	The maximum travel distance to an extinguisher from any point shall be less than 75 feet

Means of Egress: Tents with side walls are required to provide an adequate number of emergency exits. Exits must be distributed evenly around the exterior of the tent, and should meet the requirements of *Table 2, Egress Size and Number* below:

Table 2: Egress Size and Number

Occupant Load	Minimum Number of Means of Egress	Minimum Width of Means of Egress in Inches
10 to 199	2	72
200 to 499	3	72
500 to 999	4	96
1,000 to 1,999	5	120
2,000 to 2,999	6	120
Over 3,000	Consult with EHS	

Portable Tent Heaters: For tents that are enclosed with sides, portable tent heaters may be utilized. Heaters must be forced air heaters with an enclosed flame. The heater unit must be at least 10 feet from the edge of the tent, and must not impede egress routes. Propane gas is an acceptable fuel, however propane cylinders must be properly secured and be at least 10 feet from flammable and combustible substances, including but not limited to, landscaping, décor, furniture, and the tent itself. The cylinder must be properly labeled and have a “No Smoking” sign prominently displayed.

D. AMUSEMENT DEVICES

All amusement devices must be inspected and permitted prior to use. Inspections of amusement devices must be performed by a contracted third party inspector. It is the responsibility of the Event Coordinator to ensure that an inspection takes place prior to the event. *Temporary Structure Permit Applications* for amusement devices must be submitted to the EHS 15 business days prior to the event.

Permit Process: A *Temporary Structure Permit Application* must be submitted for each amusement device. A complete permit application must include:

- A George Mason University campus map indicating the location of the event, detailed site plan indicating the layout of amusement devices including location of surrounding buildings, tents, stages, and other event equipment.
- If multiple devices require a permit only one site plan is required however a copy must be submitted with each application.
- A certificate of insurance that satisfies university and commonwealth minimum insurance requirements from the owner or vendor providing the amusement device. The certificate of insurance should identify the Commonwealth of Virginia, George Mason University and its officers, employees, agents and volunteers as additionally insured.
- A copy of the *Student Services Entertainment and Event Agreement* available from the Office of Risk Management (risk.gmu.edu, 703-993-2599).
- A specifications or cut sheet on the amusement device from the manufacturer.

Weekday Events: For events with amusement devices held on a weekday, an inspection of the amusement devices by a contracted third party inspector must be completed at least two hours before the start of the event. For an inspection to be performed, the devices must be erected in the location in which it will remain for the entire event. The inspector will conduct the inspection and issue a report. The completed report must be submitted immediately to the EHS. A representative from the EHS will conduct a site walk along with the inspector. A permit may be issued based on the inspectors report. A permit must be received prior to the start of the event and the usage of the device.

Weekend or Holiday Events: For events with amusement devices held on a weekend or holiday, a permit will be issued for the amusement device(s) the last business day before the event. An inspection will not be completed for the purposes of receiving a permit prior to the erection of an

amusement device for weekend or holiday events. However, on the day of the event, all amusement devices must be inspected by a contracted third party inspector prior to the start of the event. Any deficiencies that are noted in the inspector's report must be corrected prior to the start of the event or the usage of the device. The inspector's final report must be submitted to EHS (fax: 703-993-8996) and the Bureau of Capital Outlay Management (fax: 804-225-4709) prior to the start of the event.

E. TEMPORARY STAGES AND PLATFORMS

A *Temporary Structure Permit Application* is required to be submitted to EHS for each stage or platform 10 business days prior to the event. A representative from the EHS will conduct a site safety inspection at least two hours prior to the use of the stage or platform. A *Temporary Structure Permit Application* for a stage or platform must include:

- George Mason University campus map indication the location of the event.
- A detailed site plan, including anchoring method and location of surrounding buildings or structures.
- Detailed floor plan with egress and exits shown and furniture/equipment arrangement

F. APPLICATION SUBMISSION

All *Temporary Structure Permit Applications* and associated documentation should be submitted to EHS at:

Email: safety@gmu.edu
Fax: 703-993-8996
Physical Address: Environmental Health and Safety Office
Police and Safety Headquarters
4393 University Drive MS: 5E2
Fairfax, VA 22030

Appendix A Definitions

Amusement Device: Any device or structure that is open to students, employees, and visitors by which persons are moved in an unusual manner for entertainment (Virginia Statewide Fire Prevention Code, 2012). This includes, but is not limited to inflatable devices, portable rock climbing walls, and rides of all types. Devices that are not considered amusement devices include playground or recreational equipment, coin operated rides designed for three or less riders, mechanical bulls, electric trackless trains, and ‘water walking balls’ or ‘euro balls’.

Conference Administration Coordinator: A George Mason University employee who is responsible for the event that is being coordinated by an outside organization or group (see University Policy 1103 *Space Utilization and Scheduling*).

Event Coordinator: The person who is responsible for the venue or event (see University Policy 1103). The Event Coordinator may also serve as the Conference Administration Coordinator, if they are a George Mason University employee. This person is required to provide their contact information on *Temporary Structure Permit Application* and serve as the emergency contact for the event. The Event Coordinator is also responsible for appointing Crowd Managers when the anticipated audience is greater than 1000 persons (see *Crowd Manager Guide*) and responsible for rescheduling the event or disseminating information if an emergency occurs.

Temporary Structure: Any structure that can be readily and completely dismantled and removed from the site between periods of actual use and includes amusement devices, tents, stages, and platforms (Virginia Statewide Fire Prevention Code, 2012).

Tent: A structure, enclosure, or shelter, with or without side-walls or drops, constructed of a fabric or pliable material supported by any manor except by air or the contents that it protects (Virginia Statewide Fire Prevention Code, 2012). Support ropes and guy lines are included as part of the tent for the purpose of this document.

Stage/Platform: A raised area that is used for worship, the presentation of music, plays or other entertainment; the raised area for lecturers and speakers, or any other similar purposes (Virginia Statewide Fire Prevention Code, 2012).

Temporary Structure Permit Application

Complete one form for EACH of the following: Tent(s) over 400 square feet, amusement device(s), or stage(s) / platform(s). For additional information and the required documentation, refer to the *Temporary Structure Permit Guide*. Email completed Permit Application Packet to the Environmental Health & Safety Office (EHS) at safety@gmu.edu, or fax to EHS at 703.993.8996.

SECTION 1 - EVENT CONTACT INFORMATION

Conference Administration Coordinator Name

Phone Number

Email

Event Coordinator Name

Cell Phone Number

Email

SECTION 2 - EVENT INFORMATION

Name of Event

25 Live Reference #

Date of Event

Time of Event

Purpose of Structure During the Event:

**Proposed Time for
Site Safety Inspection**

Nearest Building

Distance to Nearest Building / Structure (ft)

North:

South:

East:

West:

SECTION 3 - STRUCTURE DETAILS

Type of Structure: Tent Amusement Device Temporary Stage/Platform

Name of Rental Company or Owner of the Structure

Emergency Phone Number

Structure Erected By

Structure Size - Including Anchoring Devices (ft)

Length:

Width:

Height (at edge or sidewall):

Method Used for Anchoring

SECTION 4 - COMPLETE FOR TENTS ONLY

Number of Sidewalls:

Date Erected:

Date Taken Down:

SECTION 5 - COMPLETE FOR AMUSEMENT DEVICES ONLY

Name of Person/Company Inspecting Device

Phone Number

Serial #

3rd Party Inspection Date/Time:

SECTION 6 - COMPLETE FOR TEMPORARY STAGE/PLATFORM ONLY

Manufacturer

Floor Load Rating (psf)

SECTION 7 - PERMIT APPLICATION PACKET MATERIALS

In addition to Page 1 of this application, the following additional materials must also be submitted. Refer to the *Temporary Structure Permit Guide* for details.

All Packets Include:

- Temporary Structure Permit Application.*
- Site plan showing location of proposed structure, surrounding buildings, and streets.

Tents Packets Also Include:

- Detailed site plan, including method of tie-down and/or anchorage, and location of surrounding buildings or structures.
- Detailed floor plan with egress and exits shown (for tents with sidewalls), furniture/equipment arrangement, and any other additional equipment associated with events.
- Certificate of flame resistance (only for tents over 400 square feet).
- Evidence (e.g. email, statement, or markings) that Miss Utility and Facilities Management Customer Service Center have been contacted and all utilities are marked (only for tents that require stakes to be used for anchoring).

Amusement Device Packets Also Include:

- Detailed site plan indicating the layout of amusement devices including location of surrounding buildings, tents, stages, and other event equipment.
- Certificate of insurance that satisfies university and commonwealth minimum insurance requirements.
- Copy of the *Student Services Entertainment and Event Agreement* (available at risk.gmu.edu).
- Specification or cut sheet for the amusement device.

Temporary Stage/Platform Packets Also Include:

- Detailed site plan including method of anchorage and location of surrounding buildings or structures.
- Detailed floor plan with egress and exits shown and furniture/equipment arrangement.