



Robert L. Quinn  
Commissioner

# State of New Hampshire

DEPARTMENT OF SAFETY

*Division of Fire Safety*

*Office of the State Fire Marshal*

**Office:** 110 Smokey Bear Boulevard, Concord, NH 03301

**Mailing Address:** 33 Hazen Drive, Concord, NH 03305

**Telephone:** 603-223-4289 • **Fax:** 603-223-4294

[www.nh.gov/firesafety](http://www.nh.gov/firesafety)



Paul J. Parisi  
State Fire Marshal

## TENT INSPECTION CHECKLIST

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Location of Inspection:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Tent Company:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Tent Company Representative (Name & Number):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Tent Manufacturer, Style, and Size:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Associated Building Permit Information:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Inspector Organization:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Inspector Name & Phone Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

1. This checklist is intended for use by AHJ's in conducting required inspections of tents. Specific chapter and section references are from NFPA 102, 2011 Edition, NFPA 101, 2015 Edition, NFPA 1, 2015 Edition, the International Building Code 2015 Edition.

2. As of January 1, 2019, new legislation became effective which states that a building permit and flame resistant permit shall not be required for a tent of any size erected as an accessory structure on property that is an owner-occupied, one or 2-family dwelling. See RSA 155-A:2, V-a and, 155:20, III) below for more details. AHJ **cannot** inspect these tents regardless of size and occupant load.

3. NFPA defines a Tent as a temporary structure, the covering of which is made of pliable material that achieves its support by mechanical means such as beams, columns, poles, or arches, or by ropes or cables or both.

4. NFPA defines an Assembly Occupancy as an occupancy (1) used for a gathering of 50 or more persons for deliberation, worship, entertainment, eating, drinking, amusement, awaiting transportation, or similar uses; or (2) used as a special amusement building, regardless of occupant load. (NFPA 101 Ch. 3.3.190.2\*) RSA 155:17, I.

5. This checklist does not pertain to Air Supported Air Inflated Structures as defined in NFPA 102.

6. This checklist does not pertain to Special Amusement Buildings as defined in NFPA 101 Ch. 13.4.8.

7. Tents smaller than 400 square feet in size are exempt from the requirements listed below. NH Building Code Review Board Amendment BD-15-10-17.

8. This checklist shall pertain only to structures erected for a period of less than 180 days.

REFERENCE	PASS	FAIL	N/A	COMMENTS
<b>Paperwork Required Upon Request of Inspection</b>				
1. Building permit. IBC- 3103.1.1				
2. Proof of fire resistive fabric for <u>each section</u> of material (certificate or label). NH RSA 155:20, NFPA 102 Ch. 8.3.1				
3. * <u>Construction documents</u> to include a site plan with the tent location and information delineating the means of egress and occupant load. IBC-3103.2 *defined below				
4. Emergency action plan (assembly only). NFPA 101 Ch. 12.7.13.1.				
5. Crowd manager training (assembly only). NFPA 101 Ch. 12.7.6.1.				
6. Application; Issuance; Revocation. – A permit shall be obtained from the licensing agency by the owner or operator of any place of assembly. Such permit shall be issued without charge for one year from date of issue and shall be revocable for cause. Application for permit shall be made to the licensing agency who may require building plans, showing type of construction, exits, aisles and seating arrangements and details of decorations. No permit shall be issued by the licensing agency until the provisions of this chapter have been complied with. NH RSA 155:19				
<b>Assembly Occupancy - For tents with an occupant load of 50 people or more</b>				
1. Unless otherwise stated, all tents with an occupant load of 50 people or more must comply with NFPA 101 ch.12.1.1.1 New Assembly Occupancy. NH RSA 155:17, I				
2. Assembly Permit required. NH RSA 155:18				
3. Exits, other than main exterior exit doors that obviously and clearly are identifiable as exits (open sides of a tent), shall be marked by an approved sign that is readily visible from any direction of exit access. NFPA 101 Ch. 7.10.1.2.1				
4. Occupant load posted. NFPA 101 Ch. 12.7.9.3.1				
5. Emergency Action Plan. NFPA 101 Ch. 12.7.13.1				
6. Location and spacing- there shall be a minimum of 10 feet between stake lines, or if 10 feet is not sufficient the distance necessary for means of egress shall govern. NFPA 102 Ch. 8.4.1 and 8.4.2.2				
7. Illumination of Means of Egress- means of egress, other than for private party tents not exceeding 1200 ft <sup>2</sup> (112 m <sup>2</sup> ), shall be illuminated in accordance with Section 7.8. NFPA 101 Ch. 12.2.8.				
8. Assembly occupancies shall be provided with a minimum of one trained crowd manager or crowd manager supervisor. Where the occupant load exceeds 250, additional trained crowd managers or crowd manager supervisors shall be provided at a ratio of one crowd manager or crowd manager supervisor for every 250 occupants, unless otherwise permitted by one of the following:				

REFERENCE	PASS	FAIL	N/A	COMMENTS
<b>Onsite Inspection</b>				
<p>(a) This requirement shall not apply to assembly occupancies used exclusively for religious worship with an occupant load not exceeding 500.</p> <p>(b) The ratio of trained crowd managers to occupants shall be permitted to be reduced where, in the opinion of the AHJ, the existence of an approved, supervised automatic sprinkler system and the nature of the event warrant. NFPA 101 Ch. 12.7.6.1</p>				
<p>1. Portable Fire Extinguishing Equipment- Portable fire extinguishing equipment of approved types shall be furnished and maintained in tents in such quantity and in such locations as direct by the AHJ. NFPA 102 Ch.8.6.</p>				
<p>2. The finished ground level enclosed by the structure, and the surrounding finished ground level not less than 10 ft (3050 mm) outside of the structure, shall be cleared of all flammable or combustible material and vegetation. NFPA 102 Ch.8.5.2.1</p>				
<p>3. Tents shall be erected to cover not more than 75 percent of the premises, unless otherwise approved by the AHJ. NFPA 102 Ch. 8.1.3</p>				
<p>4. The placement of tents relative to other structures shall be at the discretion of the authority having jurisdiction, with consideration given to occupancy, use, opening, exposure, and other similar factors. NFPA 102 Ch. 8.4.4</p>				
<p>5. No hay, straw, shavings or similar combustible materials that have not been treated to make them flame retardant to a degree acceptable to the AHJ shall be permitted within any structure used as an assembly occupancy. NFPA 1 Ch. 25.1.5.3</p>				
<p>6. The electrical system shall be installed, maintained, and operated in a safe and professional manner. When in use, portable electrical systems shall be inspected daily by a qualified person representing the owner, and any defects found shall be corrected before the public is admitted. NFPA 1 Ch. 25.1.9.2 and NEC Ch. 5 Article 525.23 for GFI equipment.</p>				
<p>7. The electrical system and equipment shall be isolated from the public by proper elevation or guarding, and all electrical fuses and switches shall be enclosed in approved enclosures. Cables on the ground in areas traversed by the public shall be placed in trenches or protected by approved covers. NFPA 1 Ch. 25.1.9.3</p>				
<p>8. Generators and other internal combustion power sources shall be separated from temporary membrane structures and tents by a minimum of 5 ft (1.5 m) and shall be protected from contact by fencing, enclosure, or other approved means. NFPA 1 Ch. 25.1.12.1</p>				

<b>Open Flame and Heating</b>				
1. Smoking shall not be permitted in any tent, unless approved by the AHJ. NFPA 101 Ch. 11.11.4.2.1				
2. In rooms or areas where smoking is prohibited, plainly visible signs shall be posted that read as follows: NO SMOKING. NFPA 101 Ch. 11.11.4.2.2				
3. Open flame devices- the use of open flame devices shall be approved by the AHJ if they are listed in the exceptions in NFPA 101 Ch. 12.7.3. (assembly only)				
4. Heating devices- only labeled and listed heating devices shall be used. NFPA 101 Ch.11.11.6.				
5. Propane powered heaters. Containers for liquefied petroleum gases shall be installed not less than 60 in. (1525 mm) from any tent and shall be in accordance with the provisions of NFPA 58, <i>Liquefied Petroleum Gas Code</i> . NFPA 101 Ch. 11.11.6.1.3				
6. Propane tanks shall be secured in the upright position and protected from vehicular traffic. NFPA 101 Ch. 11.11.6.1.4.				
<b>Cooking Under a Tent</b>				
<b><u>Must meet all the requirements in 1 or *2-9 inclusive in anticipation of administrative rule adoption*</u></b>				
1a. Cooking equipment used in processes producing smoke or grease-laden vapors shall be equipped with an exhaust system that complies with all the equipment and performance requirements of this standard. NFPA 96 Ch.4.1.1				
1b. Cooking equipment that produces grease-laden vapors and that might be a source of ignition of grease in the hood, grease removal device, or duct shall be protected by fire-extinguishing equipment. NFPA 96 Ch. 10.1.2				
2. The tent under which the cooking is occurring must be at least 20 feet from any other tents or structures.				
3. Only the subjects involved in the cooking operations are allowed under the tent where the cooking is occurring.				
4. A class K fire extinguisher must be present in close proximity for immediate use near the tents under which the cooking is occurring.				
5. The tent under which cooking occurs shall not have any sides.				
6. The public shall not have access to the tent under which the cooking is occurring.				
7. No cooking under a tent shall occur which uses solid fuel burning appliances.				
8. All electrical devices and wiring used shall comply with NEC 70 including Ch. 5 Article 525.23 for GFI equipment.				
9. All cooking equipment shall be maintained and used in accordance to the manufacturers operating instructions.				

**COMMENTS:**

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**FOLLOW-UP:**

**1. Based upon the information collected on this form, corrective action (check one)  IS  IS NOT required.**

**If corrective action is required, when do you anticipate it will be completed? \_\_\_\_\_**

**2. A re-inspection of this tent (check one)  IS  IS NOT required.**

**If a re-inspection is required, it will occur on or before \_\_\_\_\_**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature of Inspector**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

**155-A:2 State Building Code V-a.** Any event tent erected on public or private property shall comply with the applicable provisions of the state building code and state fire code. Notwithstanding paragraph V, counties, towns, cities, and village districts shall not adopt any rule, regulation, or ordinance regarding event tents erected on public or private property in addition to those established in the state building code and state fire code. A building permit shall not be required for a tent of any size erected as an accessory structure on property that is an owner-occupied, one or 2-family dwelling.

**155:20 Flame Resistant Canvas and Tents. -**

III. No permit shall be required under RSA 155:19 for a tent of any size erected as an accessory structure on property that is an owner-occupied, one or 2-family dwelling.

**155-A:2 State Building Code VII.** The contractor of a building, building component, or structure shall be responsible for meeting the minimum requirements of the state building code and state fire code.

**Construction documents** are defined as written, graphic and pictorial documents prepared or assembled for describing the design, location and physical characteristics of the elements of a project necessary for obtaining a building permit.