



# COVID-19 Temporary Operational Permit Provisions for Tents & Outdoor Heaters during the Pandemic



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### Permitting Information and Exceptions Provided for Using Outdoor Spaces when Public Health Rules Limit Indoor Assembly Uses

Tents pose a life safety risk due to flammability and collapse considerations. Larger tents are regulated by the Fire and Building Codes. Sources of heat can also pose risks, whether the heat is provided by propane/Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) or electricity. This document presents a summary of code requirements as well as current exceptions allowed during the COVID emergency operational mode we are experiencing.

### TENTS

A City of Marysville Operational Permit is required for a temporary tent, canopy, or air-supported structure that exceeds four-hundred (400) square feet in size. Tents four-hundred (400) square feet and smaller do not require an Operational Permit.

**No-fee permit during the COVID emergency:** The City of Marysville will issue a no-fee operational permit for tents to responsible parties who are moving some or all of their service or business outside due to public health rules limiting indoor use. A typical example would be outdoor dining. The no-fee operational permit includes conditions you must follow regarding tent materials and installation to comply with safety requirements in the fire code. The permit is valid for ninety (90) days from date of issuance. In the event ninety (90) days have passed from the date of issuance, and the Governor's proclamation is still in effect limiting indoor dining, the permit will be automatically extend an additional ninety (90) days.

If you are renting your tent from a tent company, please notify the company if you are eligible for the no-fee operational permit and check the invoice to ensure they are not inadvertently charging you for any City of Marysville operational permit fees.

**Make sure your tent can be approved by the Building Official and/or Fire Marshal:** If you are purchasing a tent greater than four-hundred (400) square feet, please ensure that it meets the International Fire Code flame retardant standards. You will be required to accept responsibility and liability for the proper installation of the tent per industry standards and/or manufacturer's installation instructions. Temporary tents should not be occupied during periods of snow or ice accumulation unless designed for full structural loading per the International Building Code. Tents four-hundred (400) square feet and smaller should be removed during snow and ice accumulation and wind events. Tents rented through a reputable tent rental company will meet International Fire Code standards and the tent company will assume liability for proper installation.

**How close to a building can a tent be installed?** For example, tents covering dining tables generally require a set-back between tents and buildings of a minimum of ten (10) feet, primarily to allow access for emergency services. Spacing between tents greater than four-hundred (400) square feet requires a minimum separation of twelve (12) feet.

### **What are the full permit conditions for an operational permit for a tents?**

Please see permitting conditions below.

### OUTDOOR HEATING AND LIGHTING

**Electric heaters and lighting** are allowed outside as well as inside tents and do not require a separate permit from the City of Marysville. Electric heaters are allowed to be powered by a single, heavy-duty extension cord which must be plugged directly into an approved receptacle or outlet. Extension cords, if used for lighting, can only be used on a temporary



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basis and must not be installed for permanent use. They must not be connected to each other and should never be attached to permanent fixtures or pass through holes in walls. Any significant electrical outlet must remain covered. This applies to junction boxes, circuit breaker panels, and any type of outlet box. Electrical cords must be protected from wear and damage and to avoid trip hazards.

**Propane/LPG heaters** are allowed outside as well as inside tents and do not require a separate permit from the City of Marysville. Propane/LPG heaters shall be radiant-type heaters having a self-contained twenty (20) lb. or smaller propane tank. Propane radiant-type heaters must be listed and used in accordance with the manufacturer’s recommendation and located no closer than three (3) feet from combustibles, including the tent or membrane structure. Propane radiant- type heaters must also have tip over switches, which automatically shuts off the flow of propane to the appliance if the appliance is tilted more than fifteen (15) degrees from vertical. Proper ventilation is required for all fuel burning devices.

## PERMIT CONDITIONS: TEMPORARY TENT PERMITS

Minimum number and width of exits/egress ways shall be as listed on the chart below. Maximum travel distance to an exit shall be one-hundred (100) feet when inside the tent. (2015 IFC Section 3103.12.2)

Occupant Load	Minimum number of means of egress	Minimum width of each means of egress (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	7	120

- Each exit shall be provided with a lighted “EXIT” sign with letters at least five (5) inches in height. (2015 IFC Section 3103.12.6)
- Provide at least one fire extinguisher rated a minimum of 2-A:10-B:C for each tent. The location of each extinguisher shall be marked by signs, which are clearly visible. The maximum travel distance to any fire extinguisher within the tent shall be fifty (50) feet. (2015 IFC Section 3104.12)
- Post “NO SMOKING” signs, which are readily visible throughout the tent/canopy, and enforce this policy. (2015 IFC Section 3104.6)
- The grounds, both inside and outside, shall be kept free and clear of combustible waste. Any waste shall be removed and stored in an approved manner. (2015 IFC Sections 3104.21 & 3104.22)
- There shall be no open flame devices or demonstrations allowed in the tent without prior approval by the Building Code Official and/or Fire Code Official. (2015 IFC Section 3104.7)
- The sidewalls drop and top of the tent shall be of flame retardant material. (2015 IFC Section 3104.2)
- Any unforeseen conditions that would present a fire hazard, or would contribute to rapid spread of a fire, or would delay or interfere with a rapid exit from the tent, which



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are not covered by this permit, shall be immediately abated or corrected. (2015 IFC Section 105.3)

- Electric powered heating devices are allowed inside the tent. Electric powered heating devices shall have tip over protection.
- Electric heaters and other electric appliances shall be listed and approved by UL, FM or other approved testing agencies. (2015 IFC Section 605.7) Cords for electric heaters shall either be plugged directly into approved heavy-duty extension cords or approved receptacles. Only a single extension cord per appliance/heater may be used and all extension cords shall connect directly to an approved receptacle.
- All power cords in walkways to be contained within a cord cover.
- Portable liquid propane/LPG fueled radiant-type heaters may be allowed inside of a tent or membrane structure upon approval by the Building Code Official and/or Fire Code Official.
- Portable propane/LPG radiant-type heaters must have tip over protection and be located no closer than three (3) feet from combustibles, including the tent or membrane structure. Only radiant-type heater with self-contained propane tanks not exceeding 20 lbs. capacity shall be allowed.
- To be valid, this permit including attachments must be posted near the occupancy/activities. (2015 IFC Section 105.3.5)

**NOTE:** These conditions are for temporary operational permits for tents and membrane structures issued during COVID emergency operations and are subject to change once COVID emergency operations are no longer in effect.

### **For more information Contact:**

John Dorcas, Building Official at 360-363-8209 or [jdorcas@marysvillewa.gov](mailto:jdorcas@marysvillewa.gov)

Tom Maloney, Fire Marshal at 360-363-8506 or [tmaloney@marysvillwa.gov](mailto:tmaloney@marysvillwa.gov)

Fire Inspections 360-363-8525 or [minspectors@marysvillewa.gov](mailto:minspectors@marysvillewa.gov)

***Thank you for your commitment to public safety, We wish you a safe and successful 2020/2021***