

## **Special Events Guidelines ~ TENTS**

### **from Howard County Office of the Fire Marshal**

#### **1. Requirements**

- a. Any tent over 120 ft<sup>2</sup> requires a permit from Howard County Department of Inspection, License and Permits.
- b. Tents and canopies used for food service require a permit from the Howard County Health Department.
- c. All electrical devices, wiring, and generators shall be permitted, inspected and approved by a Howard County Electrical Inspector prior to use.
- d Tents shall be permitted on a temporary basis. e. As of January 1, 2013 all canopy and tent material shall comply with the flame resistance requirements set by the Office of the Fire Marshal. The tent or canopy shall have a label affixed or an on-site certification stating that the tent complies with NFPA 701, California State Fire Marshal, or other testing standard approved by the Office of the Fire Marshal. The on-site certification must identify the make and model of the tent along with the certifying testing agency.

#### **2 Tent Location**

- a. All tents shall be located a minimum of 10 ft from any structure. The location and placement of a tent shall not block any exit from a structure. The placement shall not create a situation where the building occupants will exit through the tent to get to a safe area.
- b. A 10ft separation is required after every 100 ft of tents. In addition, 2 rows of tents are allowed to be set up back to back then a 10ft separation is required before another row of tents may be set up.
- c. Tents and canopies shall not be set up inside a building unless approved by the OFM.

#### **3. Cooking/Food Warming in Tents**

- a. Canopies or tents used for cooking shall not be occupied by the public. All cooking operations shall take place under a separate canopy.

#### **4. Heating of Tents**

- a. Only heating devices labeled by a recognized testing laboratory, i.e. UL, shall be used.
- b. Electrical heating units used inside a tent shall be approved by the Office of the Fire Marshal.
- c. Fuel fired devices shall be located on the exterior of the tent and air ducted into the tent.
- d. Propane tanks/cylinders are not allowed inside the tent and must be a minimum 5 feet from any door or opening on the exterior; 10 feet if only one means of egress.
- e. Tanks shall be secured in an upright position and protected from vehicle traffic.

#### **5. General Safety Features for Tents**

- i. Exits from tents shall not be obstructed
- ii. Guide wires or tent stakes shall not obstruct egress.
- iii. Two exits shall be provided from the tent if its capacity is greater than 49 persons. All tents shall have a minimum of 1 exit.
- iv. Exit signs shall be provided.

Hay, straw, shavings or similar combustible material shall not be permitted within the structure unless approved by the Office of the Fire Marshal.