



Mecklenburg County Code Enforcement (including Mecklenburg County Fire Marshal [MCFM]) & Charlotte Fire Department (CFD) Joint Policy

January 26, 2018

Reference: Special Events and Temporary Structures

Joint Policy on Permits, Plan Review and Inspections

This joint policy was developed to clarify permitting and inspection roles and responsibilities between the City of Charlotte Fire Department and Mecklenburg County Code Enforcement, including the Mecklenburg County Fire Marshal.

The purpose of the policy is to provide clear direction for compliance with the requirements of the North Carolina State Fire Prevention Code, North Carolina State Building Codes and to establish a clear and delineated process for special event permitting, plan review and inspections by City and County agencies.

There are four (4) distinct categories of special events based on existence of structures and duration. They are typically categorized by type of structure (temporary structure or existing building) and length of time the event will be held. These categories are listed below: *(Notes 1 & 2 apply to all.)*

1. Outdoor Special Events with or without Temporary Structures (less than 7 days)

Outdoor special events, tents and temporary structures (stages, shelters, seating, etc.) erected for a period of less than 7 days must comply with the applicable provisions of the North Carolina Fire Prevention Code and Section 3103 of the North Carolina State Building Code. The North Carolina Fire Prevention Code addresses life safety concerns for these type of installations, as provided in Sections 102.8 and 102.9 in Chapter 24 for tents. The Fire Prevention Code also addresses egress requirements in Chapter 10. Electrical equipment, wiring and hazards are provided in Section 605. The enforcement of special event life safety and code regulations for these events will be in compliance with the NC State Fire Prevention Code, administered by the CFD and the MCFM.

Effective immediately, Code Enforcement will no longer issue building, electrical, mechanical or plumbing permits for outdoor special events and temporary structures being erected for a period of less than 7 days. Historically, these events have been and will continue to be permitted and or inspected for life safety by the CFD the MCFM, as applicable.

If the CFD or MCFM determines that assistance from Mecklenburg County Code Enforcement on matters of design, code compliance, design methodology or calculation is needed, these services are provided to the customer. There will be an applicable fee for the customer in these circumstances.

For temporary structures and/or events in residential areas, representatives may confirm applicability and corresponding compliance with permitting and zoning requirements by contacting the CFD, for the areas within the City of Charlotte and the MCFM for the towns and unincorporated areas, at the contact information provided below.

2. Outdoor Special Events (7-179 Days)

a. Special Events with Temporary Structures (7- 179 days)

Outdoor special events, tents and temporary structures (stages, shelters, seating, etc.) erected for a period of 7 to 179 days, must comply with applicable provisions of the North Carolina Fire Prevention Code and Section 3103 of the North Carolina State Building Code. Section 3103 of the North Carolina State Building Code (NCSBC) requires the following:

- i. A permit for all necessary general construction work and associated trade disciplines (electrical, mechanical and plumbing).
- ii. Construction documents reflecting an existing site plan will be required, and shall include proposed structures being used, a timeline of the event, and the scope of work to be performed for the event. The site plan shall indicate location or placement of temporary structures for compliance with Table 600 (NCSBC), means of egress requirements in Chapter 10 (NCSBC), maximum exit requirement and travel distance of 100 feet. Based on the type of event and structures being used, a design professional may be required per the General Statutes of North Carolina.
- iii. Installation of electrical, mechanical and/or plumbing systems within any of these structures must comply with all applicable provisions of the North Carolina State Electrical, Mechanical and/or Plumbing codes. All appropriate permits are required at time of submittal.

b. Special Events without Temporary Structures (7- 179 days)

For events without temporary structures that are expected to last between 7-179 days, representatives will need to confirm applicability and corresponding compliance with permitting and zoning requirements by contacting the CFD at the contact information provided below.

3. Outdoor Special Events with a duration of 180 days or more

Outdoor special events and structures erected for a period of 180 days or longer are not considered “temporary” and must comply with all applicable provisions of the North Carolina State Building Code including building, electrical, mechanical, plumbing, fire prevention, energy and local ordinances.

**4. Indoor Special Events with or without Temporary Structures (maximum 3 days)
(See Notes 1 & 2)**

Special events held inside permanent buildings with or without temporary structures erected and/or modified inside permanent buildings for indoor special events (regardless of the time period) must comply with all of provisions of the North Carolina State Building Code, including building, electrical, mechanical, plumbing and fire prevention codes. All appropriate permits are required. A Memorandum of Understanding (provided on the special events page of MeckPermit.com) with Mecklenburg County Code Enforcement is required for this type of event.

These types of events will be limited to two (2) events in any existing building lasting no more than three (3) consecutive days each in any 12-month period. Additionally, these two events must have at least 180 days between them – they cannot be held less than six months apart.

For theatrical events (concerts, shows, etc.) that may need temporary supplementation of power and HVAC needs held in existing buildings already approved for the “assembly” use, using an approved temporary wiring method (Plug and Play) and such other means, will require inspections and permits by the City Charlotte Fire Department (CFD) or County Fire Marshal Office (MCFM).

Note 1: The Department’s previous policy statement (6/19/12) includes references to events that may or may not be in the public right-of-way. Further consideration led us to apply this policy regardless of location with respect to the right-of-way.

Note 2: Where building and/or electrical component installation requires Code Enforcement input, due to deviation of manufacturer’s installation instructions; the Department will require the event organizer retain a North Carolina Licensed PE for on-site observation, installation instructions and written verification that the installation is safe. Similarly, if input is required by CFD or MCFM, or if the project includes the use of Alternate Methods and Materials, the Department has the discretion to stipulate PE involvement.

Inquiries or questions regarding this joint policy should be addressed to:

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