CITY OF ASHEVILLE
FIRE CODE REGULATIONS FOR
TRADE SHOWS AND/OR EXHIBITIONS

From the Asheville Fire Marshal's Office

Dear Exhibitor,

This guide has been prepared to assist you in successfully setting up your exhibit or display at the Civic Center, so it conforms to the fire safety requirements of the City of Asheville and the State of North Carolina.

Please note those sections in **bold print**. They are the areas which seem to cause the most concern and confusion among exhibitors. By following the Fire Code, problems will be limited and a more satisfactory show will be the result.

The Fire Department Deputy Fire Marshal on duty will be glad to answer any questions you may have. You can reach our Deputy Fire Marshals at (828) 259-5640 during normal business hours or on weekends through our fire dispatch center at (828) 250-6650.

Have a good show.

Wayne Hamilton, Fire Marshal

1. **General Requirements**

A. Exit signs shall be visible from any location in the room, if not; temporary exit signs shall be posted.
B. Exits and aisles shall be clear of all obstructions. This includes charts, easels, trailer tongues, etc.
C. **Aisles shall be a minimum of eight (8) feet in the arenas and exhibit halls and minimum of 44 inches in meeting rooms.**
D. Booths which require 75 feet or more travel distance to reach the exit access aisles shall be provided with a minimum of two(2) exits remote from each other. Aisles within booths shall be 44 inches in clear width.
E. A three (3) foot clearance shall be provided around fire hose cabinets, portable fire extinguishers, and fire alarm boxes. Clear access shall be maintained to those units.
F. **Compressed flammable gases are prohibited inside this building. This includes acetylene, hydrogen, propane, LP gas, and butane. Demonstrations using certain gases may be approved only by permit under certain limited conditions and quantities, contact the Development Services Dept. for a permit application and additional information at 828-259-5673.**
G. Flammable/combustible liquids are prohibited inside this building. (Gasoline, kerosene, cleaning solvents and other petroleum based materials). Exception: See special requirement 2.A.
H. Hazardous chemicals and materials are prohibited inside a building. (Pool chemical, pesticides, herbicides, poison, etc.)
I. Combustible materials shall be limited to a one (1) day supply and shall be maintained in an orderly fashion. Storage of combustible materials behind booths is prohibited.
J. Combustible materials (i.e. crates and boxes) shall be stored outside the building in an approved area or in a storeroom having a fire resistance rating of at least two (2) hours and protected by an automatic fire extinguishing system.
K. Loading doors shall be closed before opening of the trade show and/or exhibition and remain closed while the show is open to the public.
L. Single station smoke detectors shall be provided in all enclosed exhibits exceeding 120 square feet with roofs (i.e., recreational vehicles, mobile homes, tents, etc.). An approved fire watch is required for enclosed exhibits. **No enclosed/roofed exhibits are allowed in building areas protected by automatic fire sprinklers.**

Building Fire Protection Systems:

Anytime a fire protection system or part of a fire protection system is out of service, the fire department and the fire code official shall be notified immediately. An approved fire watch shall be provided until the fire protection system has been returned to normal service.

This would include the beam detectors on the area level when **hazing**, pyrotechnics, or other activities producing smoke occurs

Trade show, exhibition, concert, performance or other entertainment:

Shall be set up as indicated on the approved plan(s). A pre-show inspection by the Fire Marshal's Office is required before the show can open to the public. Inspections may be conducted during the course of move in and tear down. Spot inspections may also be conducted during the course of the trade show, exhibition, concert, performance or other entertainment.

The trade show and/or exhibition shall not be permitted to open without the approval of the Fire Marshal or his authorized representative. Show and/or building management shall be responsible for the correction of all fire code violations found. All violations are required to be corrected within the time frame determined by the Fire Marshal or his authorized representative.

2. <u>Special Requirements</u>

A. Vehicles

Vehicles may be allowed in the building for display purposes provided they meet the following requirements:

1. All fuel tank openings shall be taped shut or locked to prevent escape of vapors.
2. The hot lead battery cable shall be disconnected from the terminal and remain disconnected while the vehicle is inside the building. Loose cable ends shall be taped to cover all the exposed metal.
3. Fueling or defueling is prohibited
4. Fuel tanks shall be filled to not more than 1/4 capacity or five (5) gallons, whichever is less.

B. Open flame devices.

Open flame devices are prohibited. Exception: contact the Development Services Dept. for a permit application and additional information at 828-259-5673. Permits are required. Examples of open flame could be the use of candles. Candles shall be securely supported on substantial noncombustible materials. The candle flame shall be

protected. A portable fire extinguisher, with a minimum UL rating of 2A:10B:C, shall be provided by the permit holder.

C. Cooking and/or warming devices.

Cooking and/or warming devices that produce grease laden vapors shall be electrically fueled only. "Sterno" may be used only for warming trays. Cooking devices shall be approved by a recognized testing laboratory (i.e., U.L., F.M.).

1. Cooking, warming devices, and/or heated products shall be isolated from the public by either placing the device a minimum of four(4) feet back from the front of the booth, or provide a Plexiglas shield between the cooking and/or warming device and the public.
2. Individual cooking and/or warming devices shall not exceed 288 square inches of surface area (i.e., 12" x 24").
3. The table surface holding the cooking and/or warming device(s) shall be of a noncombustible material.
4. A minimum of two (2) feet shall be kept between cooking devices.
5. Combustible materials shall be kept a minimum of two (2) feet away from any cooking and/or warming device.
6. A UL listed 20B:C rated fire extinguisher and lid for each device or an approved automatic extinguishing system shall be provided within any booth utilizing cooking and/or warming device. A Class K rated fire extinguishers are required for deep fat type fryers of any size.

D. Lasers.

Only Class 1 lasers shall be permitted.

E. Explosives.

Explosives and blasting agents shall be generally prohibited. Ammunition may be allowed under certain conditions. The stipulations shall be written for each trade show and/or exhibition. A permit is required. Contact the Development Services Dept. for a permit application and additional information at 828-259-5673.

1. **No permits will be granted for any un-sprinklered portion of the building.**

   3301.2.2 Sale and retail display. No person shall construct a retail display nor offer for sale explosives, explosive materials, or fireworks upon highways, sidewalks, public property, or in Group A or E occupancies.

3301.2.3 Permit restrictions. The fire code official is authorized to limit the quantity of explosives, explosive materials, or fireworks permitted at a given location.

2. Display:
   Smokeless propellant. No more than 20 pounds of smokeless propellants, each in containers of 1 pound or less capacity, may be displayed.
   Black powder. Not allowed.
   Small arms primers. No more than 10,000 small arms primers may be displayed.

3. Storage:
   Smokeless propellant. Not allowed over 20 pounds outside of a type 2 or 4 magazine.
   Black powder. Not allowed.

   These limits apply per trade show; not per individual show booth.

F. Pyrotechnics

A permit is required for the use of pyrotechnics. Contact the Development Services Dept. for a permit application and additional information at 828-259-5673.

1. **The pyrotechnician must hold a current NC indoor pyrotechnician's liscence.**

Open Flame special effects using flammable gas is prohibited.

G. Extension Cords.

1. **Extension cords shall be grounded.**

2. Extension cords shall be maintained in good condition without splices, deterioration or damage.

3. **Extension cords shall be plugged directly into an approved receptacle (not into another extension cord) and shall not be affixed to structures, extend under floor coverings and across areas of foot traffic.**

3. **Flame Retardant treatment.**

All decorations suspended from walls or ceilings, including but not limited to drapes, signs, banners, acoustical materials, cotton, hay, paper, straw, moss, split bamboo, wood chips and foam, shall be rendered flame retardant to the satisfaction of the Fire Inspector. A certificate from the manufacturer must be provided.

Field application of fire retardant chemicals must be tested by an approved third party testing agency. The Fire Dept is not allowed to field test any chemical applications.

Oilcloth, tarpaper, nylon, plastic cloths, and certain other plastic materials cannot be made flame retardant and their use is prohibited. Vertical carpet is not allowed.

4. **Lobby Areas.**

A. A lobby area may be utilized for registration provided:
   1. Storage of combustibles necessary for registration (i.e., paper, boxes, etc.), shall be limited to a one (1) day supply.
   2. Registration booths and lounge areas shall be set up only in the designated area as shown on approved plans and shall not impede required egress.

B. **Lobby areas also serve as exit access, so their use must be preapproved by the Fire Marshal's Office.**

5. **Outside Areas.**

A. **Loading Docks are regulated by Civic Center staff. Lack of loading spaces will not be an acceptable reason to block streets, fire lanes, or sidewalks.**

B. **All buildings exits are required to have their discharge areas clear, so occupants may safely leave the building. Blocking an exit discharge area is enforced the same as blocking the exit from inside the building. Keep both areas clear.**

6. **Fire Lanes and Parking.**

Parking adjacent to the building may only be in designated parking spaces, loading zones, or in the street in accordance with the requirements found in NC General Statute 20-162(b) and City ordinances.

No person shall park a vehicle or permit it to stand, whether attended or unattended, upon any public vehicular area, street, highway or roadway in any area designated as a fire lane. This prohibition includes designated fire lanes in parking lots and all other public vehicular areas. Provided, however, persons loading or unloading supplies or merchandise may park temporarily in a fire lane as long as the vehicle is left attended by a licensed driver, who can move the vehicle if so directed.

There will be no vehicles parked at the loading dock of the Thomas Wolf Auditorium while the building is occupied. This area is part of the means of egress.