



Tucson Fire Department

Cooking Booth/Tent

Information Rev. 11-08-13

It is the commitment of the Tucson Fire Department to help provide a safe environment for both booth operators and the general public. In order to achieve this, the following requirements shall be met when cooking devices are used at outdoor special events. Fire department personnel will inspect venues either before or during the event to assure compliance. If you have any questions or require further assistance please call (520) 791-4502.

Definitions

- **Cooking Booth/Tent:** A structure (tent or other construction) where food is prepared/served by any heating or cooking process such as, but not limited to, chaffing, grilling, frying, barbecuing, deep frying, baking, broiling, boiling, or steaming.
- **Vendor (Non-cooking) Booth:** All booths and tents without any cooking/heating operations.
- **Open Flame Cooking Device:** A cooking or warming device utilizing a flame where the flame is not shielded and/or is readily visible. This definition would include BBQs.
- **Grease Producing Cooking Device:** Any appliance or operation that generates grease vapors.
- **Non-Open Flame Cooking Device:** A cooking or warming device utilizing a flame where the flame producing fixture is an integrated component of the device and contained within the device by non-combustible barriers or shielding so that the flame is not readily visible or exposed to combustible material. This definition would include some types of steam tables and griddles with an integrated non-exposed open flame.
- **Deep Frying:** Any cooking operation where the product floats or is submerged in hot oil during the cooking process.
- **Tent:** A structure, enclosure or shelter, with or without sidewalls, constructed of fabric or pliable material supported by any manner except by air or the contents that it protects. Tents having an area of 400 square feet or more, and tents, open on all sides, having an area of 900 square feet or more require a permit and approval from the fire code official.

Booth Construction and Location

- All fabrics or membranes covering cooking booths shall be of flame-resistant material or be treated with a flame retardant. Documentation or proof of flame-resistance is required.
- All cooking booths shall be provided with at least one exit which shall remain clear and free from obstructions at all times.
- Cooking booths' cooking operations (IE. barbecuing or deep frying) shall be separated from non-cooking vendor booths by a minimum of 20 feet.

Exception: Booths that serve beverages or food that does not require a cooking process are not required to have a 20-foot separation from cooking booths. Where cooking booths and beverage booths are arranged together without a separation there shall be a 20-foot separation between this arrangement and the other vendor booths.

- Booths shall be constructed in a manner to provide necessary structural integrity. Booth construction shall be subject to approval by the fire code official. Please submit drawings to TFD for approval.
- If cooking appliances are utilized on a table the table shall be flame-resistant, or a flame-resistant covering shall be placed under the appliance. This includes the use of Fuel Gel (Sterno).
- Cooking devices shall be isolated from the public by a physical barrier. Cooking areas shall not be accessible by the public by physical barrier or caution tape.
- Cooking equipment shall be located as to protect the booth's exit path in the case of an accidental fire or spill at the cooking equipment.

Cooking Equipment

General Requirements

- **Open flame or grease producing cooking devices shall not be used within booths or tents** that have any material covering the roof unless supplied with an approved exhaust hood as required by the Tucson Mechanical Code.

Exception: Exposed open flame cooking devices may be used within cooking booths that have a non-combustible ceiling and sides when approved by the fire code official.

* Fryers have inherent dangers by heating and cooking with oils and fats. Thus, fryers are regulated much like exposed open flame cooking devices. Fryers include cooking equipment made specifically for deep fat frying as well as cookware containing oil being heated by a separate heating device.

- A Non-Open Flame Cooking Device (IE. griddles) may be used in a cooking booth or under a combustible overhang when approved by the fire code official.
- Open or non-open flame cooking devices, open flames, or flammable and combustible liquids are not permitted inside or within 20 feet of booths/tents or membrane structures that are not considered cooking booths.
- Electronic warming/cooking devices which do not create grease vapors may be used within cooking booths/tents, but must be separated from combustible materials.
- All cooking activities shall be shielded (physically) from public access.
- All cooking and warming devices shall be separated from combustibles.

LPG (Liquefied Petroleum Gases)

- LPG tanks shall not be located within any booth or tent.
Exception: If an LPG appliance is approved for use by TFD, cylinders with a capacity of 2.7 lbs. or less may be allowed.
- All LPG gas cylinders not in use shall be stored outside the cooking booth in a secure location and be protected against tampering.
- **All tanks shall be secured** and protected from damage in the upright position.
- Hoses shall be a type approved for use with LPG equipment.
- Tanks shall be closed when cooking equipment is not in use.
- All LPG equipment connections shall be tested for leaks prior to use. This may be done with a soap and water solution.

Deep Frying

- Deep fat fryers shall not be used within booths unless supplied with an approved exhaust hood as required by the Tucson Mechanical Code.
- It is recommended that when using a deep fat fryer outside a non-combustible (metal) overhang be used in case of rain.
- Where deep fat fryers are installed adjacent to exposed open flame cooking devices they shall be separated by 16 inches or a non-combustible baffle at least 8 inches in height.

Solid Fuel (Wood or Charcoal)

- Cooking devices that use wood or charcoal for fuel shall not be used within booths or tents unless supplied with an approved exhaust hood as required by the Tucson Mechanical Code.
- Only commercially sold lighter fluid, electric starters, or kindling shall be used to ignite wood or charcoal fueled equipment. No gasoline or kerosene shall be used.
- Solid fueled cooking devices shall be kept away from combustible materials. The distance shall be dependent on the size of the cooking equipment and shall be approved by the fire code official.

Electric Cooking Equipment

- Electrically powered cooking equipment which does not create grease vapors may be used in a cooking booth or under a combustible overhang when approved by the fire code official.
- Electric cooking equipment would include microwave and electric ovens, electric steam tables, and electric cook top griddles.
- All extension cords shall be of the 3-wire grounded type.
- Extension cords shall be protected from foot traffic.
- If electrically powered cooking appliances are utilized on a table the table shall be flame-resistant, or a flame-resistant covering shall be placed under the appliance.
- If electricity is supplied by a generator, it shall be located 20' from any booth/tent.
 - Generators shall not be located within 20' of combustibles.
 - Generators shall be provided with a physical barrier to protected accidental contact.

Warming Trays

- Gel fuel (Sterno) and small wick burner type warming canisters used under food trays for heating and warming foods are considered exposed open flame cooking devices and must be used with caution within a cooking booth.
- Electric warming trays are recommended for use within structures that have combustible overhangs.

- Gel fuel (Sterno) and small wick burner type warming trays may be used within cooking booths that have a non-combustible overhang (ceiling) or no overhang at all when approved by the fire code official.

Fire Extinguishers

- **For all cooking operations, other than deep frying, a minimum 2A:10BC rated fire extinguisher is required.**
 - Extinguishers shall be placed in a conspicuous location, adjacent to the cooking appliances and readily accessible for immediate use.
 - Extinguishers shall be unobstructed and shall not be obscured from view.
- **For deep frying cooking operations, a Class K rated portable fire extinguisher shall be provided.**
- **For deep frying cooking operations, other than commercial fryers, an extinguisher with a minimum 40BC rating may be used when approved by the fire code official.**
- If cooking appliances are separated, additional extinguishers are required.
- **Portable fire extinguishers shall be inspected annually and shall have a current inspection tag.**

Electrical Setups

- All electric service shall be in compliance with the National Electrical Code and local modifications.
- All exterior power setups shall be GFCI protected.
- Only listed power strips with circuit breaker protection are allowed as multi-plug adapters.
- **All extension cords shall be of the 3-wire grounded type.**
- Extension cords shall be protected from foot traffic.
- If electricity is supplied by a generator, it shall be located 20' from any booth/tent.
 - Generators shall not be located within 20' of combustibles.
 - Generators shall be provided with a physical barrier to protected accidental contact.
 - Fuels shall be stored in a secured area away from cooking/heating processes and public access.

Housekeeping

- Trash containers shall be emptied regularly.
- Combustible materials shall not be allowed to accumulate so as to cause a fire hazard.
- All cooking surfaces shall be cleaned to prevent the accumulation of grease.

This information sheet provides the minimum requirements for exterior cooking booths. Additional fire and life safety requirements may be necessary depending on the particular situation. These requirements will be at the discretion of the fire code official. During fire department inspection vendors should be prepared to make any necessary changes in order to comply with these requirements.

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