



*The TOWNSHIP of*  
**NORTH DUMFRIES**

**Tents Building Permit &  
Approvals Guide**

This guide has been developed for convenience purposes only.

The Owner is responsible for ensuring compliance with all current Town by-laws and other applicable regulations. Although every attempt has been made to provide accurate information at the time of printing, it is subject to change without notice and is provided as a **guide only**.

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For further information on permit requirements for tents, please contact:

Development Services Department  
Building Services Department  
Telephone: (519) 632-8800 ext. 124  
[building@northdumfries.ca](mailto:building@northdumfries.ca)

## Temporary Tents within the Township of North Dumfries

This guide provides specific information related to building permit application requirements for tents and has been developed to assist property owners to allow the use of a tent or a group of tents for events within the Township of North Dumfries.

This guide should not be relied on in place of professional expertise. If you are unfamiliar with building construction procedures, the assistance of a qualified building contractor or architect can save you both time and money.

The Owner is responsible for ensuring compliance with all current Township by-laws and other applicable regulations. Although every attempt has been made to provide accurate information at the time of printing, it is subject to change without notice and is provided as a **guide only**.

If you are new to the process or are uncertain of the Township of North Dumfries permit application process /requirements contact the Development Services Department -Building Services Department:

(519) 632-8800 ext. 124 or [building@northdumfries.ca](mailto:building@northdumfries.ca)

### Definition of a Temporary Tent

The word “tent” as used in the Building Code is intended to refer to a temporary shelter which is used at an open air event such as a fair or an exhibition. A tent will normally be constructed of a fabric held up by poles and attached to the ground by ties. The requirement for a tent permit is not intended to be applied to fabric structures located on buildings.

Note: Permanent fabric structures are not addressed in this guide and have their own set of requirements under the Ontario Building Code.

Please note:

- A Plumbing Permit is required for any plumbing work.
- If food will be prepared or served, please contact the clerks department at the Township. [clerks@northdumfries.ca](mailto:clerks@northdumfries.ca)
- If alcoholic beverages will be served, a Liquor Licence will be required.



## Building Permit Required for a Tent or a Group of Tents

Ontario Building Code

1.3.1.1. (5), Division C

A tent or group of tents is **exempt** from the requirement to obtain a permit under section 8 of the Act and is exempt from compliance with the Code provided that the tent or group of tents are,

- (a) not more than 60 m<sup>2</sup> in aggregate ground area,
- (b) not attached to a building, and
- (c) constructed more than 3 m from other structures.

\* The aggregate ground area refers to the sum of the total area of all tents on site. Therefore, if the total ground area of all tents on site exceeds 60 m<sup>2</sup> (645 ft<sup>2</sup>), then a permit is required.

A permit for a tent is required if you answer “yes” to any of the following statements:

- Is the proposed tent(s) larger than 60m<sup>2</sup> (645.6 ft<sup>2</sup>) in aggregate ground area?
- Will it be attached to a building?
- Will it be constructed less than 3m (9ft-10in) from another structure or property line?

Example:

A. ABC Tent Rental wishes to install three (3) 10 ft x 10 ft tents for a baseball tournament that is to take place in a park.

- No other tents will be installed on that day and the tents are located at least 10 ft (3.1 m) away from any other structure and property lines.
- The area of all three tents is 300 ft<sup>2</sup> = 27.87 m<sup>2</sup> therefore, a permit is not required for installing these tents.

B. The following week there is another tournament, and the organizers of the event would like to have one more tent.

- ABC Tent Rental will be supplying the same three tents that were used last week, and XYZ Tent Rental will be supplying one (1) 20 ft x 20 ft tent.
- The area of all four tents is 700 ft<sup>2</sup> = 65.03 m<sup>2</sup> therefore, a permit is required for installing these tents.

## Ontario Building Code Requirements for Tents

		AREA OF PROPOSED TENT	
		60m <sup>2</sup> to 225m <sup>2</sup>	> 225m <sup>2</sup>
1	Building Permit Required	✓	✓
2	Professional Engineer Design	x	✓
3	Professional Engineer Field Review	x	✓
4	Designed by Competent Person	✓	x
5	Minimum 3.0m from property lines & other structures/tents	✓	✓
6	Minimum 3.0m clearance of vegetation and combustibles	✓	✓
7	Tent fabric & films certified to CAN/ULC-S109 or NFPA 701	✓	✓
8	Access required for the purpose of firefighting.	✓	✓
9	Electrical equipment inaccessible to public	✓	✓
10	Cables on the ground placed in trenches or protected	✓	✓
11	Minimum 30m travel distance to exit	x	✓
12	Minimum width between stake lines shall be the width necessary for means of egress, but not less than 3m.	x	✓
13	Exits signs	x	✓

The most current Building Code is available at <http://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/120332>

**Note:**

1. Any tent with sidewalls shall be designed by a qualified and registered designer (BCIN)
2. A tent less than 225m<sup>2</sup> in area and with no sidewalls or bleachers shall be designed by a competent person.
3. The ground enclosed by a tent and for not less than 3m outside of such structure shall be cleared of all flammable or combustible material or vegetation that will carry fire.



## Additional Requirements for Large Tents: Tents Greater than 225m<sup>2</sup>

### Qualified Designer and Field Review Requirements

A Qualified and Registered Designer shall be required where the tent or a group of tents:

- a) Exceed 225m<sup>2</sup> (2,420ft<sup>2</sup>) in ground area
- b) Exceed 225m<sup>2</sup> (2,420ft<sup>2</sup>) in aggregate area and are closer than 3 metres apart,
- c) Contain bleachers, or
- d) Enclosed with sidewalls.

### Note:

**An application for a tent or a group of tents that meet any the above conditions will require a Professional Engineer to perform a field review.**

The support structure, frame and anchorage shall be designed, sealed and reviewed by a **professional engineer**, who is registered and licensed to practice in the province of Ontario.

The Professional Engineer shall provide details and calculations for anchorage, wind, snow (if applicable), rain load and, confirm the structural capacity of the site to support imposed loads as follows:

- Wind, snow and rain load calculations/details
- Foundation/anchorage calculations/details
- Mechanical ventilation details (If applicable)

### Example:

A. ABC Tent Rental wishes to install a 30ft x 30ft tent without any sidewalls.

*As part of their Building Permit Application, they will not require a Professional Engineer to perform a field review, unless code compliance is not satisfactorily provided. 3.13.1.2(2)(a)(b), Div. B, OBC*

B. ABC Tent Rental wishes to install a 40ft x 80ft tent (with or without sidewalls).

*As part of their Building Permit Application, they will require a Professional Engineer to perform a field review. 3.13.1.2.(2)(a)(b), Div. B, OBC*

C. ABC Tent Rental wishes to install a 30ft x 30ft tent less than 3 m (9ft 10 in) away from a 30ft x 60 ft.

*As part of their Building Permit Application, they will require a Professional Engineer to perform a field review. 3.13.1.2.(2)(c), Div. B, OBC*

D. ABC Tent Rental wishes to install a 30ft x 30ft tent without any sidewalls. Their customer will then be placing bleachers inside the tent.

*As part of their Building Permit Application, they will require a Professional Engineer to perform a field review. 3.13.1.2.(2)(d), Div. B, OBC*

## Means of Egress and Exits

Ontario Building Code 3.14.1.3. (1), Division C

- (1) Except as provided in Sentences (2) and (3), tents shall conform to Section 3.3 and 3.4.
- (2) A tent need not conform to Article 3.4.6.12 except where swing type doors are provided.
- (3) Where the area between adjacent tents or a tent and the property line is used as a means of egress, the minimum width between stake lines shall be the width necessary for means of egress, but not less than 3m.

## Means of Egress

- Sufficient and unobstructed exits and aisles to accommodate the tents maximum occupant load.
- The travel distance to an exit from any point must not exceed 30m
- The headroom clearance for doorways shall be not less than 2030 mm (6' 8")

3.4.3.6.(3) Div. B, OBC

- Means of egress must be illuminated with light having an intensity of at least one (1) foot-candle while the structure is occupied.
- Power for means of egress lighting must be supplied from a separate circuit or source.

## Exit Signs

- Emergency exit signage is required if occupancy is greater than 150 people.
- Required emergency exits must be designated and identified with proper signage.

## Separation of Exits

Ontario Building Code 3.4.1.2. (1), Division B

- (1) Except as permitted by Sentence (2), if more than one exit is required from a floor area, each exit shall be separate from every other exit leading from that floor area.
- (2) If more than two exits are provided from a floor area, exits are permitted to converge in conformance with Sentence 3.4.3.1.(2), provided the cumulative capacity of the converging exits does not contribute more than 50% of the total required exit width for the floor area.

## Sanitary Facilities

Ontario Building Code 3.14.1.8. (1), Division B

- (1) Except as provided in Sentence (3), the minimum number of water closets for tents shall be determined in accordance with Table 3.7.4.3.E.
- (2) Article 3.7.4.17. applies to sanitary facilities in Sentence (1).
- (3) Sanitary privies, chemical closets or other means for the disposal of human waste may be provided in lieu of toilet fixtures.

**Tents less than 225m2 (2420ft<sup>2</sup>):**

Consult your local portable privy provider to determine how many privies you will require for your event.

**Tents greater than 225m2 (2420ft<sup>2</sup>):**

The number of privies shall comply to Table 3.7.4.3.E of the Ontario Building Code, as amended.

Table 3.7.4.3.E



<b>(Privies required) for Each Sex</b>	
<b>Number of Persons</b>	<b>Minimum number of Water Closets</b>
1 to 50	2
51 to 70	3
71 to 90	4
91 to 110	5
111 to 140	6
141 to 180	7
181 to 220	8
220 to 260	9
<b>For groups of 260 or more, provide 10+1 for each additional increment of 40 persons of each sex.</b>	



## Fire Safety Requirements

The Ontario Fire Code contains minimum fire and life safety requirements specific to Assembly Occupancies for special events:

- All tent fabrics shall be certified to CAN/ULC-S109, “Flame Test of Flame-Resistant Fabrics and Films”, or NFPA 701, “Fire Tests for Flame Propagation of Textiles and Films.”
- Hay, straw, shavings or similar combustible materials other than that necessary for the daily feeding of livestock and care of animals shall not be permitted unless provisions have been made for such activities under the fire safety plan.
- Smoking and open flame devices shall not be permitted in a tent unless provisions have been made for such activities under the fire safety plan.

## Electrical Safety Requirements

In Ontario electrical safety compliance inspections are conducted by the Electrical Safety Authority.

Your electrical contractor should be familiar with the electrical permitting and inspection process.

Any electrical systems shall be inaccessible to the public. Cables on ground in a tent shall be placed in trenches or protected to prevent damage.

An electrical permit is required for fairs and concessions when:

- Temporary wiring (lighting and power) is attached to the steel structure.
- Power is supplied to the structure from a permanent power- source,
- A generator is supplied that is required to be grounded
- The steel structure is required to be bonded to ground.

The ESA will conduct a visual inspection to see if the existing wiring and electrical service are safe. In addition to ensuring that electrical installations meet the requirements of the Ontario Electrical Safety Code, the inspector will check to see whether these installations are satisfactory.

**For more information contact the Electrical Safety Authority directly at:**

**By phone: 1-877-ESA-SAFE (372-7233) OR [www.esasafe.com](http://www.esasafe.com)**



## Once the Permit has been Issued

1. Once the permit is obtained for your tent; the erection of the tent may take place.
2. Prior to use or Occupancy, an inspection is required. You will need to book the inspection:

### **TO SCHEDULE AN INSPECTION**

**Please allow 2 business days for scheduling inspections**

- A permit number must accompany all requests via telephone and/or email
- Ensure the reviewed permit package is printed and on site for all inspections

Inspection Phone Line: 519-632-8800 Ext. 124

OR

email: [building@northdumfries.ca](mailto:building@northdumfries.ca)

3. A Building Inspector will attend the site and verify the size, location and anchorage of the tent or group of tents and issue a Tent Occupancy Permit if satisfactory.
4. Upon completion of your event, the tent is to be removed and confirmed to the building department.

## Additional Approvals for All Tents

Tents erected on Town property require approval.

Contact the Clerk's Office at 519-632-8800 ext. 130 or [clerks@northdumfries.ca](mailto:clerks@northdumfries.ca)

Events that involves amplification of noise, music etc. is the applicant and owner's responsibility to ensure that the event complies with the Township of North Dumfries Noise By-law.

Contact: By-law Services Division at 519-632-8800 ext. 107 or [bylaw@northdumfries.ca](mailto:bylaw@northdumfries.ca)



## TENT PERMIT REQUIREMENTS

Please submit this form with a complete application for permit approval. Period for which a tent permit is issued or refused is 10 business days (reference: 2.4.1.1B). Tent permit applications for garden centres may require site plan approval.

1. A permit is not required for a tent or group of tents if:
  - a. Aggregate ground area < 60 m<sup>2</sup> (646 ft<sup>2</sup>).
  - b. Detached from all buildings.
  - c. Constructed >3m (9M0m) from other structures.
  - d. Zoning approval is always required.
  
2. A permit is required for a tent or group of tents if:
  - a. Ground area > 60m<sup>2</sup> (646ft<sup>2</sup>) and < 225m<sup>2</sup> (2420ft<sup>2</sup>).
  - b. Aggregate ground area > 60m<sup>2</sup> (646ft<sup>2</sup>) and < 225m<sup>2</sup> (2420ft<sup>2</sup>) and is closer than 3m (9'-10") apart.
  - c. Do not contain bleachers or are not enclosed with sidewalks. If yes, see number 3.

1. Application for a permit to construct or demolish	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Complete Schedule 1. The designer(s) is exempt from qualification requirements.	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Two copies of Site Plan.	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Two copies of tent drawings.	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Certificate of flame resistance conforming to CAN/ULC S-109 or NFPA 701.	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Tent permit fee \$285	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reference: 3.13.1.1, 3.13.1.2, 3.13.1.6, and 3.13.1.10	

3. This section applies to a tent or group of tents that if:
  - a. Total ground/ aggregate area > 225m<sup>2</sup> (2420ft<sup>2</sup>)
  - b. Contain bleachers or sidewalls.

1. Application for a permit to construct or demolish	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Complete Schedule 1. The designer(s) must be qualified with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing for Building Structural and Small or Large Buildings, depending on the building the tent(s) will be serving.	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Two copies of Site Plan.	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Two copies of tent drawings including designer information on all documents respecting design activities as per 2.17.4.7(1)(f) and 2.17.5.1(c).	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Two copies of Professional Engineer supporting structure and anchorage details including designer information described above.	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Certificate of flame resistance conforming to CAN/ULC S-109 or NFPA 701.	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Commitment Form for Professional Engineer.	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Tent permit fee is \$285 (per tent)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reference: 3.13.1.3 to 3.13.1.10	