

Special Events Program

Responsible Administrator: Campus Fire Marshal
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Summary: This section outlines the policy and procedures related to the Special Events Program that is administered through the Environmental Health & Safety (EHS) Department.

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1. Program Description

The Special Events Program covers fire and life safety requirements for events that occur on the University of California, Irvine campus. The Fire Safety Division approves and establishes conditions to ensure public safety at public gatherings including but not limited to: concerts, sporting events, production filming, and festivals. They also inspect and approve various events related to outdoor cooking, trade shows, and other campus events.

2. Scope

This program focuses on the inspection, plan review and approval of special events in order to promote fire and life safety. This program is intended to ensure reasonable and consistent protection for persons and property during campus events.

3. Definitions

- **Canopy** – A structure, enclosure or shelter constructed of fabric or pliable materials supported by any manner except by air or the contents it protects and is open without sidewalls or drops on 75 percent or more of the perimeter.
- **Campus Fire Marshal (CFM)** – The CFM is a campus representative who has the responsibility and authority to enforce fire and life-safety requirements in all UC Irvine facilities.
- **Combustible Material** – This term applies to solid material that is capable of igniting and burning.
- **Combustible Liquid** – Liquids with a flash point at or above 100°F which is capable of ignition and requires a higher degree of heat to produce a fire.
- **Designated Campus Fire Marshal (DCFM)** – At the UC Irvine campus, the State Fire Marshal's office has delegated the Designated Campus Fire Marshal as the Authority Having Jurisdiction for plan review and construction inspections. The DCFM also has the responsibility and authority to enforce State Fire Marshal regulations and requirements on campus.

- **Exit** – The portion of a means of egress that is separated from all other spaces of the building to provide a protected way of travel to the exit discharge.
- **Fireworks** – Any device containing chemical elements and compounds capable of burning independently of the oxygen of the atmosphere, and producing audible, visual, mechanical, or thermal effects which are useful as pyrotechnic devices or for entertainment.
- **Flame Retardant** – An approved chemical, chemical compound, or mixture which, when applied in an approved manner (applied by a certified technician licensed by the California State Fire Marshal’s Office) to any material, will raise the ignition point of the material; rendering the material incapable of supporting combustion.
- **Flammable Liquid** – A liquid that has a flash point of less than 100° F and will ignite at a low temperature and continue to burn.
- **Open Flame Cooking Devices** – Include but are not limited to gas grills, gas fueled food warmers, range style burners, solid fuel fires, sternos canisters etc.
- **Open Flames** – Include but are limited to candles, torches, bonfires, and other devices using a flame.
- **Pyrotechnics** – Any combination of materials, including pyrotechnic composition, which, by an ignition source, produce an audible, visual, mechanical or thermal effect designed and intended to be useful for industrial, agricultural, personal safety, or educational purposes. The term “pyrotechnic device” includes, but is not limited to, agricultural and wildlife fireworks, model rockets, exempt fireworks, emergency signaling devices, and special effects.
- **Solid Fuel Cooking** – Including but not limited to non-gas barbeques, smokers, or open campfire style cooking using mesquite, briquettes, or charcoal.
- **Special Events** – Any assembly of 50 or more people including, but not limited to: performances, luncheons, dinners, gatherings, and sporting events. Furthermore, anytime a space is used outside of its normal function (i.e., using the Bren Event Basketball Court for a stage and seating) it is considered a special event and approval is required. (Refer to Section 5.1.3 for further information on types of special events.)
- **Tents** – A structure, enclosure or shelter constructed of fabric or pliable material supported by any manner except by air or the contents that it protects.

4. Responsibilities

- The Fire Safety Division is designated as the Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) in the interpretation and application of fire protection codes and regulations. The Fire Safety Division is authorized to suspend unsafe operations or activities and has the responsibility for ensuring compliance with all fire protection requirements including, but not limited to:
 - The review and approval of all campus special events.
 - The inspections of special events facilities prior to use or occupancy.
 - The issuance of “stop orders” when event protocol is done contrary to the provisions of the building or fire protection codes, standards, or regulations.

- The UC IRVINE sponsoring event coordinator is responsible for the following:
 - Submit a completed [Special Events Application](#) and a set of event site plans to the Fire Safety Division for approval two weeks prior to the event. The plans should include information on the type of event, amount of people attending, the layout of the space, and any additional information required by the Fire Safety Division.
 - Call the Fire Safety Division prior to the event for a final inspection of the event space and layout.
 - Implement all recommended changes that the Fire Safety Division suggests to ensure compliance with the fire and building codes.
 - Have general knowledge of this program to ensure that no fire and life safety conditions arise, or actions taken that could lead to loss of life or property during a campus sponsored special event.

5. Program Components

Special events that occur on UC Irvine property must be coordinated with the Fire Safety Division. The Fire Safety Division will assist with an evaluation and, if necessary, provide recommendations on any hazards that the event may present. By following the guidelines and requirements of this program, we can prevent the loss of life and property during campus sponsored special events.

- Approval Process
 - All special events must be approved by the Fire Safety Division. A [Special Events Application](#) must be completed and submitted to the Fire Safety Division two weeks prior to the event. Along with the application, the event site plan must be provided to the Fire Safety Division. The plans should include:
 - Type of event
 - Amount of people attending
 - Layout of the space
 - Unusual hazards
 - Any additional information required by the Fire Safety Division
 - The Fire Safety Division must conduct a final fire and life safety inspection prior to the event opening. All tents, seating, and other items must be finalized for inspection.
 - Types of Special Event – Events that require approval from the Fire Safety Division include, but are not limited to:
 - A space used outside of its normal function (i.e., using the Bren Event Basketball Court for a stage and chairs, or filming on a plaza).
 - Outside gathering with 50 occupants or more.
 - Tents with a cumulative area over 200 sq. ft. or canopies greater than 400 sq. ft.
 - The use of candles or open flames inside buildings.
 - To conduct open burning such as bonfires.
 - Events using barbeques or grills. When using perishable foods, a temporary food permit is required. Refer to the Environmental Health and Safety website for further information on temporary food permits: <https://www.ehs.uci.edu/enviro-health/food-safety/food-safety-permit-process.php>
- Fire Department Access

One of the most important aspects of a quick response to an emergency is the ability for emergency response vehicles to have an immediate and unencumbered access to a site or building. During special events, no part of the fire department access should be obstructed at any time. Fire Department Access requirements include:

 - There must be an unobstructed Fire Apparatus Lane of not less than 20 feet in width and a vertical clearance of not less than 13 feet 6 inches.

- Barricades cannot obstruct the fire access lane unless manned during the time of the event.
 - Fire hydrants require 15 feet clearance along curbs.
 - 3 feet of clear space shall be maintained around the circumference of fire hydrants unless otherwise required or approved.
 - Fire department connections must not be obstructed at any time.
 - Fire department fire sprinkler inlets must not be obstructed at any time.
- Smoking Policy

Smoking-related fires are still the most common of all fires in the United States. Refer to UC Irvine's "Smoking Policy", section 903-14. Smoking requirements:

- UC Irvine Smoking Policy: <https://ucipolicy.ellucid.com/documents/view/119/?security=2d6320aef20cc5da71dcd30c5cccf17583eca68>

- Tents, Canopies and Temporary Structures

Tents and membrane structures having a cumulative area in excess of 200 square feet and canopies in excess of 400 square feet shall not be erected, operated, or maintained for any purpose without first obtaining approval from the Fire Safety Division. Plans for the event must be reviewed by the Campus Fire Marshal and a site inspection must be conducted prior to the event. Fire and Life Safety requirements for tents, canopies, and temporary structures include:

- Use Period – Temporary tents and canopies shall not be erected for a period of more than 180 days within a 12-month period on a single premise.
- Location – Tents, canopies, or other temporary structures shall not be located within 20 feet of lot lines, buildings, other tents, canopies, parked vehicles, or internal combustion engines. Tents and canopies shall not be located within 30 feet of combustible vegetation.
- Labels – Tents, canopies, and temporary structures need to have a permanently affixed label bearing the identification of the size and the material type of the tent. All tent fabrics must be of an approved flame-retardant material and a certified label must be present at all times.
 - Tents that are not made of flame-retardant material or do not have an affixed label will not be approved for use and are prohibited at all special events on campus.
 - EZ-UP tents require a flame-retardant label.
 - Tents that have had their material repaired or treated must have a certificate indicating the date of repair or treatment.
- Flammable/Combustible Material – Flammable/combustible material is prohibited within any tent, canopy, or temporary structure. Flammable/combustible material requirements include:
 - Flammable liquids shall be stored or used in an approved manner no less than 50 feet away from tents, canopies, or temporary structures.
 - Combustible material must be stored in an approved manner at least 50 feet away from tents, canopies, or temporary structures.
- Decorative Material – Decorations within a tent must be constructed or treated so that the decorations are flame retardant. Flame retardant certification paperwork must be present on site during the time of the event. Refer to the Fire Safety Program for further requirements for Wall Decorations and Finishes <https://ehs.uci.edu/programs/pdf/fire-safety/fire-prevention.pdf>
- Open or Exposed Flames – Open flame or other devices emitting flames, fire, or heat are not approved inside or located within 20 feet of a tent, canopy, or temporary structure.
- Smoking – Smoking is prohibited in tents, canopies, or temporary structures. "No Smoking" signs must be conspicuously posted throughout tents, canopies, or temporary structures.

- Exits – Tents or canopies with sides require proper exiting. Each tent shall have no less than one free and clear exit door or clear opening. The number of exit signs and exits vary depending on the occupant load of the event. The Fire Safety Division will assist the event coordinator with the correct amount of exits and signs during the plan review process.
 - Portable Fire Extinguishers – A fire extinguisher must be available within 50 feet of any point inside of a tent, canopy, or other temporary structure.
 - Tent/Canopy Approval – Refer to this program for details on the special events approval process.
 - Easy-Up Tents – These tents (10' x 10') do not require approval from the Fire Safety Division under the following conditions:
 - The minimum distance from any other tent shall be 10 feet. When tents are not at least ten feet apart they will be considered connected, and their cumulative area will require approval from the Fire Safety Division.
- Open Flames

Open flame devices are defined as candles, torches, gas grills, butane burners, or any other flame producing device. Organizations, groups, and individuals sponsoring events that include open flame devices must complete the [Special Events Application](#). Each event will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis to determine the appropriateness of the venue for open flame devices. Open flame devices will only be approved when appropriate measures have been taken to ensure fire safety. Safety Procedures – Where open flames are approved, the following safety procedures must be followed:

- Portable Fire Extinguishers – Events using open flame devices or combustible/flammable liquids require an approved fire extinguisher.
 - The fire extinguisher must be UL listed with a rating of not less than 2A:10B:C and a minimum of five pounds.
 - All fire extinguishers shall bear a current California State Fire Marshal service tag and be fully charged.
 - Fire extinguishers shall be placed in a visible location where it is easily accessible. A fire extinguisher must be at least 50 feet from any open flame device.
- Outdoor Open Flame Requirements
 - Gas and Electric Barbecue Grills – where cooking is approved, the following safety procedures must be followed:
 - Barbecue grills are prohibited inside buildings.
 - Barbeques shall be placed 20 feet from any building.
 - Barbecues shall be at least 20 feet away from any tent, canopy, or temporary structure.
 - Liquefied petroleum gases (such as propane or butane) shall not exceed two 5-gallon cylinders per tent or canopy. Cylinders not in use should be kept 10 feet away from an open flame and be capped.
 - Only UL approved propane containers can be used.
 - All cylinders shall be stored in an upright position and secured to prevent tip over.
 - Propane cylinders shall not be used within 30 feet from any motor vehicle.
 - Refer to the Gas and Electric Barbecue Grill Requirements from the Fire Prevention Program for further requirements: <https://ehs.uci.edu/programs/pdf/fire-safety/fire-prevention.pdf>

- Charcoal Barbecue Grills
 - These types of grills are not approved for use at University sponsored functions and activities on campus property. For additional information, contact EHS at 824-6200.
- Heating and Cooking Appliances/ Food Vendor Requirements
 - Microwaves, electric ovens, electric steam tables, electric top griddles, deep well fat fryers, and any other commercial heating/cooking appliance requires approval from the Fire Safety Division prior to use in an event.
 - **Portable Gas Stove/ Butane Burner with 1 Range are prohibited from use on campus. Example:**



- Solid fuel (Sterno) canisters are approved for warming food only. Canisters **must** be secure in an approved metal holder (chafer) at all times; places lose on tables not permitted. All combustibles decorative items (ribbons, dry leaves, paper, etc.) must not be place under chafer or within 3 feet from the canisters when lit. Example of metal chafer:



- Propane Heaters
 - Propane heaters will only be approved on a case-by-case basis.
 - Propane heaters must be rigidly supported and approved by the Fire Safety Division.
 - The heater must be UL or FM tested and incorporate a tip-over switch which will turn off the heating element and fan if the unit is knocked over.
 - Must not be used within 50 feet of any flammable storage area.
 - The placement of the heater will not create a tripping or evacuation hazard.
 - A portable fire extinguisher is required when using a propane heater.
 - Refer to the Fire Prevention Program for further portable propane heater requirements: <http://www.ehs.uci.edu/programs/fire/fireprog.html#614>
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- Open Burning – Open burning is defined as any open/exposed flame, whether located indoors or outdoors, that could cause a potential fire hazard (i.e., bonfires, campfires, leaf burning, art work involving flames, pyrotechnics of any kind, etc.)
 - Requirements – Refer to the Fire Prevention Program for outdoor burning requirements: <https://ehs.uci.edu/programs/pdf/fire-safety/fire-prevention.pdf>
 - Outdoor Dining Candle Use – Candles used for outdoor dining tables must follow the safety requirements of this program.
- Indoor Open Flame Requirements
 - Candles – The use of candles inside a building may be authorized and permitted under the following conditions:
 - Candles are prohibited in areas where occupants stand or in an aisle or exit.
 - Candelabras with flaming candles shall be securely fastened in place to prevent overturning and shall be located away from occupants.
 - Candles must not be used in close proximity to heat or smoke detectors or sprinkler heads in such a way that the heat or smoke may activate the device.
 - All candles must be extinguished at the end of the event.
 - **The use of “handheld candles” is prohibited.**
 - Dining Table Requirements – When candles are being used for dining purposes, the following safety requirements must be followed:
 - Candles must be in a “tip proof” container. A tip proof container is one that will return to an upright position when tilted to an angle of 45 degrees from vertical.
 - The container must be made of a non-combustible material (glass or metal).
 - Candles must be able to self-extinguish if tipped over.
 - If tipped, the container must be capable of containing the entire candle and flame, dripping wax, and any convected heat within the container.
 - Tablecloths with a candle device on them shall not hang down over 6 inches.
 - The candle wick shall not pass over the top of the candle sides.
 - Tables with candles must be 5 feet away from curtains or drapes.
 - Candles must be 24 inches from any corner of the table.
 - Candles must be 3 feet away from any combustibles or decorative combustibles.
 - **The use of “handheld candles” is prohibited.**
 - Barbecue Grills – The use of any type of portable barbecue grill (propane or charcoal) is prohibited inside a building.
 - Decorative Open Flame Devices – The use of any open flame decorative device is prohibited unless written authorization is given by the Fire Safety Division.
- Open Flame Approval – Refer to this program for details on the special events approval process.
- Seating Requirements

Events with over 50 occupants require approval from the Fire Safety Division. Depending on the location and size of the event, the Campus Fire Marshal will calculate the total amount of occupants allowed at one time. Below are seating requirements that allow for a quick evacuation of occupants in the event of an emergency.

- Standard seating shall provide not less than 12 inches from the back of one chair to the most forward projection of the chair immediately behind.
- Rows of chairs shall be not less than 33" from back-to-back.
- The number of seats between any seat and an aisle shall not be greater than 20 when the seats are without backrests and 9 when the seats have backrests.
- Seating using tables and/or chairs requires a minimum aisle space free from obstructions of 36 inches.
- Line of travel for any seat to a safe exit pathway shall not be greater than 200 feet.
- All loose seats, folding chairs, or similar seating not fixed to the floor shall be bonded together in groups of no less than three.
- When the number of chairs exceeds 300, they must be bonded at the lower and upper position as approved.
- EXCEPTION: Bonding is not required when such seating is less than 300 seats.
- Fireworks / Pyrotechnics Requirements
 - Pyrotechnic displays must be approved by the Fire Safety Division as well as the Office of the State Fire Marshal (OSFM). The event coordinator must submit a written proposal to the Fire Safety Division and submit a [Special Events Application](#) as far in advance of the event as possible, but at least three weeks prior to allow adequate plan review time. The proposal must include the following:
 - Type of display
 - Complete manifest of the materials that will be discharged.
 - Location site plan of fireworks display site (i.e., audience seating, restricted areas, landing zone, etc.)
 - Current pyrotechnic license by a recognized agency must be provided.
 - Proof of insurance
 - Method of Transportation and Storage. Include transportation route while on campus.
 - The individual handling the pyrotechnics must be licensed by the State Fire Marshal for the material to be used. The individual is responsible for the proper storage, handling, transportation, uses, and disposal of the materials.
 - The event coordinator must provide a Fire Watch (as determined by the Fire Safety Division) for the length of time that the material is handled.
 - Fire Safety Division's Fire Watch Program: <https://www.ehs.uci.edu/programs/pdf/fire-safety/fire-watch.pdf>
 - Further detailed requirements will be made after the plan review process.

- Television/Movie Production

All television or movie filming requires approval from the Fire Safety Division and the Office of the State Fire Marshal (OSFM) prior to production. The event coordinator must complete a [Special Events Application](#) and submit a written proposal to the Fire Safety Division for plan review. Further detailed fire/life safety requirements will be made based on the information given in the proposal.

- Generators – Emergency Power

Special events that require/use emergency power must acquire approval from the Fire Safety Division. Follow these emergency power requirements when emergency power is needed:

- All generators shall be properly grounded with a 10-foot steel rod.
- Refueling generators must be done when the public is not around.
- Proper ventilation is required to prevent generator fumes from entering the main area of the event.
- No vehicle may be parked within 100 feet of a generator.
- Generator must be fenced off from the public.
- All cables that run from the generator into a walkway must be bridged to prevent a trip hazard.
- Generators shall be a minimum of 20 feet from any public gathering.
- Generator cables shall not be placed in vehicle travel areas.

- Electrical Safety

Electrical Safety for special events is congruent with the electrical safety requirements throughout campus. Refer to the Fire Safety Program for more information on electrical safety.

- Environmental Health and Safety Electrical Policy:
<https://ehs.uci.edu/programs/pdf/safety/electrical-safety.pdf>

- Temporary Food Permits

Please review the [Food Safety and Permit Program](#) on the EHS website to determine whether a [Temporary Food Permit](#) is required for the event.

6. Reporting Requirements

- Reporting of Fires or Explosions:
 - California Health & Safety Code, Section 13107 (<https://osfm.fire.ca.gov/media/10685/reporting-fires-on-state-property-2020.pdf>) requires that all fires be reported to the SFM Office. Therefore, **ALL** fires or explosions within UC Irvine's properties or leased properties must be reported to the Fire Safety Division **IMMEDIATELY**.

7. References

Title 24, Part 9, California Code of Regulations, California Fire Code, Section 308, General Precautions Against Fire, Open Flames

Title 24, Part 9, California Code of Regulations, California Fire Code, Section 310, General Precautions Against Fire, Smoking

Title 24, Part 9, California Code of Regulations, California Fire Code, Section 503, Fire Service Features, Fire Apparatus Access Roads

Title 24, Part 9, California Code of Regulations, California Fire Code, Section 604, Emergency and Standby Power Systems

Title 24, Part 9, California Code of Regulations, California Fire Code, Sections 2401 – 2404.23, Tents, Canopies and Other Membrane Structures.