

Tent Policy:

Regardless if it is a field find or a citizen complaint, inspectors investigating tents thought to be in violation of the Minnesota State Building Code, Minnesota State Fire Code, and/or local ordinances shall follow this policy.

Steps in compliance:

1. Based on information gathered while investigating the complaint, determine the length of time the tent has been up or intends to be up.
 - a. Any tent up for more than 180 days shall comply with the Minnesota State Building Code and the zoning code.
 - b. Any tent up for less than 180 days shall comply with the Minnesota State Fire Code, local ordinances and the zoning code.
2. Write orders to the property owner either for providing more information, to come into compliance, or for removal of the hazard; whichever is applicable.
 - a. Compliance deadlines should be congruent with the deficiency. For example; a zoning violation may give 30 days for compliance but a hazardous material violation may require immediate compliance.

Major Considerations of the Minnesota Building Code:

- A building permit is required when over 200 square feet. This is only applicable if the tent has been or intends to be up for more than 180 days.
- Tents or membrane structures shall be adequately roped, braced and anchored to withstand the elements of weather and prevent collapsing.
- Structural analysis for snow and wind loads.

Major Considerations of the Minnesota State Fire Code:

- Tents in excess of 400 square feet, not meeting the requirements below, shall require a tent permit.
 - Tents <700 square feet, open on all sides (no walls), and 12 feet from structures do not require a permit.
- No more than 180 days. Anything more is subject to the building code.
- Separation is not required when the tent is not used for cooking.
- Separation is not required when the tent is less than 10,000 square feet.
- Anchorage is required to adequately withstand the elements of weather and collapse.
- 701 flame spread rating required.
- No hay, straw, or sawdust (or similar) in tent unless required for daily feeding and care of animals.
- No smoking.
- No open flame inside or within 20 feet.
- Limited heating or cooking allowed (too many requirements to list here).

Major Considerations of the Saint Paul Legislative Codes:

- Permit is required over 400 square feet, some exceptions (see fire code description above).

- Accessory temporary structures shall meet set back requirements for the zoning district. Each zoning district has varying setbacks. See section XXX.
- Agricultural Uses (65.771):
 - Allowed to be 10% of the parcel or 1,000 sq ft whichever is greater.
 - No more than 180 days.

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