



Fire Department

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CODE SUMMARY

PERMITS – AMUSEMENT BUILDINGS

A code summary is a compilation of code sections related to a specific occupancy or permit. This code summary lists sections of code pertaining to occupancies and operations as defined by the **California Fire Code**. Under each heading you will find the correlating code language and the reference cited. These requirements pertain to existing buildings. New construction may be subject to additional requirements. Please feel free to direct any questions to the Fire Prevention Division at (805) 681-5500.

SCOPE:

This guideline applies to special amusement buildings, haunted houses and similar events. Amusement buildings having an occupant load of 50 or more shall be treated as a Group A (Assembly) occupancy; all others will be a Group B occupancy. The guideline shall also apply to tents and temporary structures used for amusement and/or haunted houses.

DEFINITIONS:

Amusement Building: An amusement building is defined as a building or portion thereof, temporary or permanent, used for entertainment or educational purposes and that contains a system that transports passengers or provides a walkway through a course so arranged that the means of egress are not apparent due to theatrical distractions, are disguised, or are not readily available due to the method of transportation through the building or structure.

1. A permit is required from the fire department prior to the operation of any amusement building.

Application for a permit should be made 30 days prior to the planned opening of the amusement building to ensure an adequate amount of time for plan reviews and field inspections. The applicant is to provide the fire department with copies of the event site and/or floor plans. These plans shall identify the locations of exits, exit signage, power supply; whether temporary or permanent, locations of decorative materials required to be flame retardant, along with the necessary evidence of such. The applicant is to contact the Fire Prevention Division at least 48 hours prior to the event to schedule an inspection. (CFC 105.6.2)

2. An approved automatic smoke-detection system designed in accordance with the provisions of NFPA 72, the National Fire Alarm Code shall be installed in amusement buildings. (CFC 907.2.12)

A. The activation of any single smoke detector, the automatic sprinkler system, or other automatic fire-detection device shall immediately sound an alarm at the building at a constantly attended location from which emergency action can be initiated, including the capability of manual initiation of requirements in CFC 907.2.12.2 below. (CFC 907.2.12.1)

B. The activation of two or more smoke detectors, a single smoke detector equipped with an alarm verification feature, the automatic sprinkler system, or other approved fire detection device shall automatically:

1. Cause illumination of the means of egress with light of not less than 1 foot-candle (11 lux) at the walking surface level;
2. Stop any conflicting or confusing sounds and visual distractions;
3. Activate an approved directional exit marking that will become apparent in an emergency; and
4. Activate a prerecorded message, audible throughout the special amusement building or haunted house, instructing the patrons to proceed to the nearest exit. Alarm signals used in conjunction with the prerecorded

message shall produce a sound which is distinctive from other sounds during normal operation. (CFC 907.2.12.2)

- C. An emergency voice/alarm communication system, which is also allowed to serve as a public address system shall be installed in accordance with CFC 907.5.2.2 and be audible throughout the entire special amusement building or haunted house. (CFC 907.2.12.3)

3. An automatic sprinkler system in accordance with NFPA 13 shall be installed in all amusement buildings.

Exception: Those amusement buildings where the floor area is less than 1,000 square feet **and** the travel distance from any point to an exit is less than 50 feet. (CFC 914.7.1)

4. When the amusement building is temporary, the sprinkler water supply system may be of an approved temporary type. (CFC 914.7.1)

5. Amusement buildings having an occupant load of 50 or more shall meet the exit requirements of Group A occupancies. (CBC 411.1)

- A. For all amusement buildings classified as Group A occupancies, all exit doors must be equipped with panic hardware. Panic hardware may be omitted from the main exit of 'A' occupancies with an occupant load of less than 300 where the main exit door consists of a single door or pair of doors.

6. Illuminated or self-luminous exit signs and directional exit markings shall be provided at each required exit or exit access doorway. (CBC 411.7)

- A. Exit signs shall be internally or externally illuminated at all times; sign that are supplied by the premises power supply shall be connected to an emergency power system that provides illumination for not less than 60 minutes in case of primary power loss. (CFC 1104.3 & 1104.5.1)

Exception: Approved signs that are self-luminous and provide evenly illuminated letters having a minimum illumination of 0.06 foot-lamberts that provide luminance independent of external power sources.

7. Where mirrors, mazes or other designs disguise the path of travel, additional listed low-level signs shall be provided. (CBC 411.7)

- A. The bottom of the signs shall not be more than 8 inches above the walking surface and on or near the path of travel.

8. Combustible decorative material used in Group A occupancy amusement buildings shall be flame resistant meeting the criteria of NFPA 701. (CFC 807.1) (CBC 411.8)

- A. Materials that cannot be made flame resistant shall not be used. (CFC 807.1)
- B. Tags or documentation of required flame resistance shall be on premises at all times. (CFC 807.1.2)

9. The maximum occupant load in any Group A occupancy amusement building shall be determined by the fire code official and shall be posted in a conspicuous location. (CFC 1004.3)

10. Portable fire extinguishers shall be required with a minimum rating of not be less than 2A:10BC.

- A. The minimum travel distance to an extinguisher shall not exceed 75'. (CFC Section 906.3; Title 19 Chapter 3)

11. All electrical wiring, including the use of extension cords, shall be installed and used in compliance with the California Electrical Code and California Fire Code.

- A. Multiplug adaptors, such as cube adaptors, unfused plug strips or other such devices not complying with the California Electrical Code shall be prohibited. (CFC 605.4)

- B. Extension cords shall not be affixed to structures, extended through walls, ceilings or floors, or under doors or floor covering nor subject to physical damage. (CFC 605.4.3)
- C. Extension cords shall not be used in place of permanent wiring. (CFC 605.5)
- D. Appliance cords and extension cords shall be maintained in good condition without splices, deterioration or damage. (CFC 605.5.3)

12. Tents Used as Amusement Buildings shall meet all fire code requirements for tents and membrane structures. (See code summary for permit requirements pertaining to tents and membrane structures)