

Festival in the Park 2026

62nd Anniversary

Charlotte's "Granddaddy" Arts and Crafts Show

FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 25 4:00 pm – 9:00 pm
SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 26 10:00 am – 9:00 pm
SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 27 10:00 am – 5:00 pm

RULES AND REGULATIONS

- ❑ Awarded spaces are non-transferable. No one will be allowed to exhibit without first having juried into the Festival and having paid the exhibition fee to the Festival. Shared spaces are not permitted, and each exhibitor must jury separately. Displays must fit into designated spaces without infringing upon neighboring spaces.
- ❑ The opportunity to meet the artist and discuss their work in an informal setting attracts many visitors and increases sales. Artist should demonstrate their craft sometime during Festival hours for the benefit of those who attend unless prior approval has been secured in writing from the Director.
- ❑ Exhibitors must participate for the entire three days of the Festival. A signed application is a commitment to show. *No refunds will be made 60 days prior to the Festival.*
- ❑ Each exhibitor must realize this is an outdoor show; there is no level ground as in mall shows and weather can be uncooperative. There will be no refunds due to inclement weather.
- ❑ The Festival is family oriented. All exhibits must be in keeping with this atmosphere. The Director of the Festival shall have the sole discretion to require the removal of any work, which he or she determines violates the Festival's rules. Exhibitors shall not display or offer for sale any adulterated, misbranded or impure articles.
- ❑ Exhibitors are responsible for maintaining and leaving their assigned areas free of refuse, and in otherwise good condition. Park litter laws prohibit promotional material from being distributed unless approval is obtained in writing from the Director of the Festival.
- ❑ Only the Festival is permitted to sell T-shirts, sweatshirts, balloons and caps bearing the Festival logo. Any other similar item sold/given away by any other organization during the Festival may be confiscated.
- ❑ Although the Festival in the Park is a Charitable Organization [Internal Revenue Code Section 501(c)(3)], exhibit fees are not charitable deductions. However, exhibit fees may qualify as tax-deductible business expenses. Please consult your tax advisor.
- ❑ Each exhibitor is responsible for the collection of North Carolina and County of Mecklenburg sales tax (8.25%) and payment thereof to the NC Department of Revenue. (Contact: Registration Info, 704-519-3000 ext #2; Web link: <https://www.ncdor.gov/taxes-forms/sales-and-use-tax/how-file-sales-and-use-tax-resources>) The Festival in the Park is not acting as an agent and will not be responsible for the collection or payment of any sales tax. There is no commission charge for any art sales.
- ❑ Festival will not be responsible in any way (i) for any theft or damage to the exhibit or equipment or any other property belonging to Vendor or Vendor's employees who are participating in the Festival nor (ii) for any theft or other loss of Vendor's proceeds or receipts from his/her/its participation in the Festival. Since there is no way to insure the property of individuals attending or participating in the Festival, either as an exhibitor, an artist displaying artwork or photography on a panel board, or a person or group of persons performing on the stage, each individual must be entirely responsible for his/her own equipment, artwork, crafts, or the like, proceeds, receipts, or any other property of any kind whatsoever, and should plan accordingly, in order to prevent any theft or mysterious disappearance of any of same during the Festival.
- ❑ Registration will begin on Friday (first day of Festival) from 8:00am to 2:00pm. **No one will be allowed to check in after 2:00pm.** Early check-in is available on Thursday.
- ❑ All vehicles must be removed from the exhibit area by 2:00pm on opening day and two hours prior to opening on remaining days. *No parking will be allowed on grassy areas and all vehicles will need to be removed from within the park as soon as unloaded.*
- ❑ On Sunday closing, vehicles will be allowed in the Park upon the announcement from security. This is for your safety and safety of your patrons.
- ❑ Pets are not allowed in the park during Festival week. (per city ordinance)
- ❑ Failure to abide by the rules and regulations set forth herein may be grounds for removal from the Festival. No refund shall be provided for such removal.
- ❑ Each exhibitor shall indemnify and hold harmless Festival for any damage, cost or liability caused by an act or omission of exhibitor during or related to the Festival.

FESTIVAL IN THE PARK PROVIDES THE FOLLOWING:

- ❑ Tent location assignment (all locations are assigned at the Festival’s discretion).
- ❑ One 110 electrical outlet per tent. Each outlet will pull a maximum of four (4) 100-watt spots. **NO MORE** than four (4) 100-watt spots are allowed. **NO EXCEPTIONS.** Vendors will be required to lower wattage if not in compliance.
- ❑ Volunteer booth sitters, if available, may be requested during specified Festival hours.
- ❑ All booth locations are accessible by vehicles for set-up/tear down.
- ❑ Exhibitor parking.
- ❑ 24-hour security.

FESTIVAL IN THE PARK DOES NOT PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING:

- ❑ Tent - **Tents shall be properly roped, braced and anchored to withstand the elements of weather and to guard against collapsing. (per Charlotte Fire Department)**
- ❑ Display equipment for setup of exhibit tents.
- ❑ Tables or chairs.
- ❑ Electrical equipment (including drop cords, light bulbs, fixtures, etc.)

ART AWARDS

Artist's Walk Awards*

Artist's Walk is an area of the Festival in the Park, which consists of fine arts and crafts. No commercial venues, electronic music or other events will be in this special area. On-site judging will take place during the first two days. The Best of Show award winner will be given a cash prize as well as a free tent space in the Artist's Walk area in 2027. Decisions of the judges shall be considered final. Honorable Mention Ribbons will also be awarded.

- Best of Show.....\$500**
- Two Judges' Choice**
 - Two Dimensional Work.....\$200 each**
 - Three Dimensional Work.....\$200 each**
- Three Merit Awards.....\$100 each**
- Honorable Mentions.....Ribbon**

Festival Lake Walk Awards**

The Festival Lake Walk is an area of artists exhibiting at Festival in the Park consisting of traditional arts and crafts. Judging will take place during the first two days of the Festival. All decisions of the judges shall be considered final. Best of Lake Walk will be given a cash prize as well as a free tent space in the Festival Lake Walk area in 2027.

- Best of Lake Walk.....\$300**
- Two Dimensional Work**
 - First Place.....\$200**
 - Second Place\$125**
 - Third Place.....\$100**
- Three Dimensional Work**
 - First Place.....\$200**
 - Second Place\$125**
 - Third Place.....\$100**

As a reminder:

- ❑ Exhibit spaces are awarded based on the quality and variety of the exhibitor pool.
- ❑ All work to be exhibited must be original and attributable solely to the demonstrating craftsperson or display artist.
- ❑ Only original artwork will be eligible for awards (prints, posters or reproductions can be displayed for purchase, but will not be included in judging).
- ❑ Festival in the Park takes no commission for any art sales.
- ❑ The Festival Exhibitor Committee will screen each artist/exhibitor during the Festival week, and if the work exhibited does not comply with the rules and regulations or the slides or photographs submitted, the artist/exhibitors would be required to leave the Festival. Judgment of the Committee in this matter will be final, and no refunds will be given.

*Early set-up will be requested
for local area art exhibitors,
it is, also, available for
all other art exhibitors:*

Thursday registration
1:00 pm – 4:00 pm
September 24, 2026

PLEASE NO EXCEPTIONS, CONCESSIONS ARE BEING PLACED

Fill out & mail
this form back
to the Festival office
or notify us by email.

You must leave park by 8pm.

1409 East Boulevard, Charlotte, NC 28203

festival@FESTIVALinthePARK.org

(You will not receive a confirmation for early set up.)

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

Phone (cell): _____

E Mail: _____

- ❑ **The Fire Marshall requires that each tent be secured at each corner with a minimum of 40 pound weights. Applicant shall ensure that tents are properly roped, braced, anchored and secured in a manner to ensure stability in light of weather conditions. Tents must also include a certificate certifying that tents are fire retardant or must have sewn-in labels indicating the same. Applicant shall be responsible for all damage caused by any tent, including personal injury or death or property damage, whether from a tent that collapses, blows away or is otherwise not secure or in some way unsafe. NO stakes only 40 pound + weights.**
- ❑ Festival in the Park's mission is to bring the community together through the arts. Consistent with this mission, the Festival values and celebrates diversity and strives to provide an inclusive community atmosphere built upon mutual respect, dignity, fairness, and equality where all people are valued regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, or sexual orientation. The Festival requires that all artists, vendors, concessionaires and other Festival participants treat others in attendance at the Festival, including attendees, staff, volunteers, vendors, artists and concessionaires, with courtesy and respect at all times. Failure to uphold these standards or to act in accordance with the Festival's commitment to a diverse and inclusive community shall be grounds for immediate dismissal from the Festival, at the sole discretion of Festival personnel.
- ❑ Access to the internet via Wi-Fi or cellular coverage may be limited and/or intermittent. The Festival has added new technical infrastructure for 2026. However, we encourage our artists to bring a backup method for accepting payment as online merchant services for processing card payments cannot be guaranteed.
- ❑ When signing our application agreement, the applicant agrees and understands that Festival is not liable for any damage to applicant's personal property while on the premises of Festival in the Park. It is each applicant's responsibility to safeguard their own personal property at all times. Festival is not responsible for any damage or theft to property left unattended.

Electrical

One 110 electrical outlet is allowed per tent. Each outlet will pull a maximum of four (4) 100-watt spots. NO MORE than four (4) 100-watt spots are allowed. Silent generators are welcome. Artists furnish their own electrical equipment.

Inclement Weather Closing

The Festival in the Park is a rain or shine event. In the case of inclement weather, you may choose to close your booth and remove your art work from the elements. However, you must notify festival staff prior to closing your booth. The parking of vehicles in Freedom Park will not be permitted for any reason, including the removal of art work, during Festival in the Park operating hours.

Booth Sitting

If provided, booth sitters will not be responsible for selling goods for the artists or the exchange of funds for items being sold by the artists.

At the beginning of the Festival, the artists should sign-up for booth sitting. The Artists Relations Committee will be responsible for having a booth sitter available to tend to the artist's booth for no more than 30 minutes per booth. This service will be provided no more than four times a day per booth/artist. Booth sitting will not be available for artists who have two or more adults in attendance for the Festival. Booth sitting will be done by both the volunteers for the Festival in addition to the ARC members based on the availability of the volunteers and ARC members.

Vendor Move Out – Sunday

Tom Geisler, Festival Security coordinator, will determine when the park is safe to allow vehicles in to load out. He is requesting that you pack up everything before you bring your vehicle into the park. Entry will be at the Lilac/Cumberland entrance and exit is on Princeton. **All traffic will be one way.**

DIRECTIONS TO FESTIVAL IN THE PARK CHECK IN AT FREEDOM PARK

GPS location: 2435 Cumberland Avenue, Charlotte, NC 28203

Note: Main entrance of the park is on East Blvd. a few streets from Cumberland Avenue

Festival in the Park

Frequently Asked Questions for Artists and Vendors

What are the hours of operation for the Festival?

September 25 -27, 2026

FRIDAY September 25 - 4 pm- 9:00 pm

SATURDAY September 26 - 10 am – 9:00 pm

SUNDAY September 27 - 10 am – 5:00 pm

Where do I park to check in for the Festival?

Check-in is at 2435 Cumberland Avenue (GPS location) entrance to Freedom Park. You can park there for a short time to check in, and then you will be allowed to enter the park to unload your tent and art work. You are to unload immediately, go to park your car and come back to set up.

Where do I park during the Festival?

The East Blvd. parking lot of Freedom Park will be reserved for all the Festival vendors/participants.

Where can I park in the evenings?

In the evenings (after the Festival) you may park at your hotel or camp ground.

Can I leave my van or RV parked in Freedom Park parking lot?

No, MCP&R does not allow it to be left overnight. You will be asked to leave by the police or it could possibly be towed. A list of RV lots were in with your acceptance letter/package.

If I have a physical disability, do I park in the same lots as the other artists and vendors?

If you have a physical disability you may park in the East Blvd lot. There are a limited number of handicap spaces in the main lot and they are usually filled very quickly.

Does the Festival supply lists of nearby restaurants?

Refer below and to your acceptance package; a list of restaurants was included.

Where is the nearest hardware store/Home Depot/Lowe's?

Blackhawk Hardware is in Park Road Shopping Center, only a few miles away. From the East Blvd Freedom Park parking lot, turn left onto East Blvd. Then turn left on Kenilworth. Slight left onto Park Road and go 1.5 miles. Park Road Shopping Center is on the left.

Lowe's at South Blvd / Iverson Way is only a few minutes away. From the East Blvd Freedom Park parking lot, turn left onto East Blvd, go approximately 1 mile and turn left on to South Blvd. Lowe's will be on your left at Iverson Way.

Home Depot at 1220 North Wendover is about 15-20 minutes away. Head northwest on East Blvd. toward Scott Avenue. Turn right at Scott, slight left at Kenilworth Avenue. Take the US 74E / I-277 N/ John Belk Frwy ramp on NC -16N. Merge on to I-277 N/US 74 East. Take exit 2B to merge onto US 74 East toward Independence Blvd. Take exit 243A to Wendover Road Southbound, merge onto N Wendover Road. Home Depot is on the left.

Target is within two miles....Turn right onto East Blvd. (Freedom Park entrance) to Kings Drive (turn left), travel North on Kings Drive. Target is at the corner of Kings and Charlottetowne Avenue / Independence Blvd.

Can I drive into the Festival area daily or nightly to unload my vehicle and restock my booth?

Yes, you may drive to your booth to unload and restock. All vehicles are to be out of the park on Friday, set up day, by 2pm. On other days, vehicles are to be out of the park two (2) hours prior to the opening. To enter after the close of the day, you must receive permission of the security/police.

What time is the best time to load and unload my goods?

See above.

Who can I speak with regarding dust? Noise? Fumes? Offensive odors?

Contact your Artist Relations booth; they will contact the appropriate person.

Dust – Operations (Megan Smith Braswell)

Noise - Operations (Megan Smith Braswell)

Fumes - Operations (Megan Smith Braswell)

Offensive Odors - Operations (Megan Smith Braswell)

Do you offer booth sitting?

Yes, booth sitting is offered.

How long are the increments for booth sitting?

Booth sitting is provided by volunteers in 30-minute increments.

How do I sign up for booth sitting?

You may sign up for booth sitting upon check-in. If you wish to sign up for booth sitting after that time, please contact the Artist Relations booth for available times.

Can the booth sitters sell my goods while I am away?

Due to the liability involved, volunteers should not be asked to exchange money.

Who can I speak with if I have a power failure in my booth?

Contact your Artist Relations booth; they will contact the appropriate person.

Power – Operations (Megan Smith Braswell)

Do you supply food for the artists?

In the Festival check-in building on top of the hill, we will have snacks, bottled water and coffee available for participants. Bottled water will also be available at Information booths within the Park & First Aid shelter.

Do you supply ice or water?

In the Festival check-in building on top of the hill, we will have snacks, bottled water and coffee available for participants. Ice will be available to purchase from the Ice Vendor. Water will also be in Information booths within the Park and the First Aid shelter.

Is there a cost for ice or water?

Yes, there is a cost for ice. But bottled water will be available in the Festival Headquarters on top of the hill along with snacks, also in Information booths within the Park and the First Aid shelter.

Are there ATMs in Freedom Park for the Festival? Where are they located?

Yes, there are ATMs in the park during the Festival. They are located at Princeton Avenue, the Main Stage Area and Concession Alley and Family Fun Zone.

**All our staff and volunteers appreciate your participation and hope
that you enjoyed the Festival.
See you next year!**

Festival in the Park presents the 17th

"Kings Drive Art Walk" fine arts & crafts festival

SATURDAY May 1, 2027 11:00 am – 6:00 pm

SUNDAY May 2, 2027 11:00 am – 5:00 pm

KDAW applications may be downloaded at

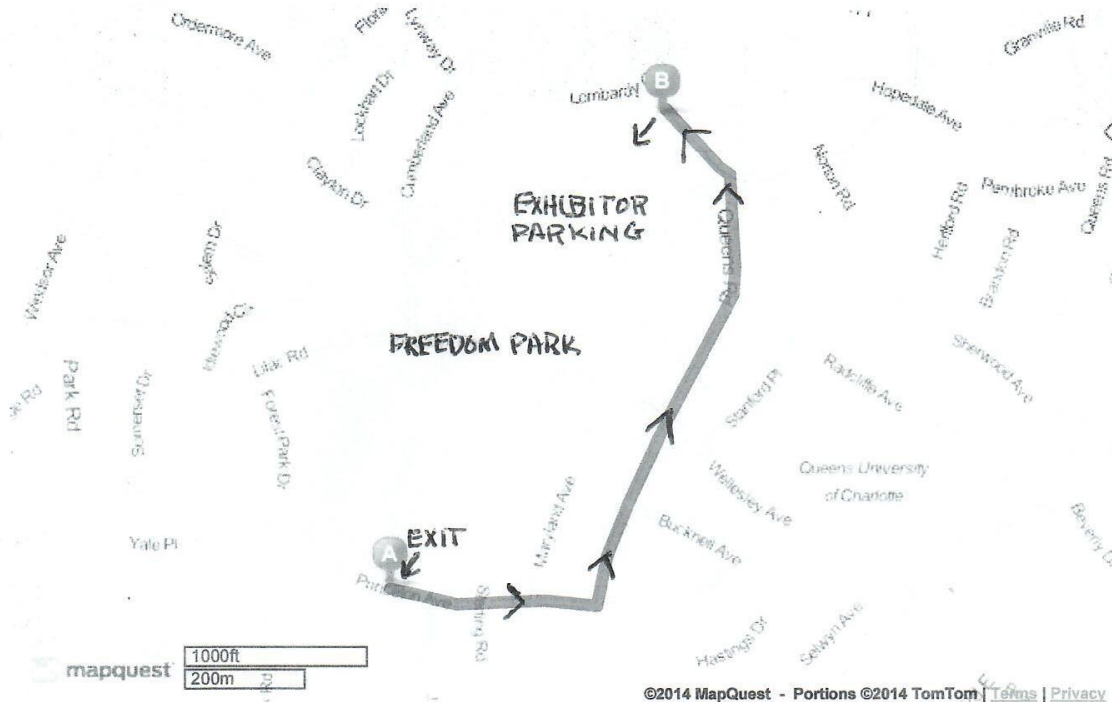
www.KingsDriveArtWalk.org

Directions to exhibitor parking after unloading on Thursday or Friday

Directions to Exhibitor parking on East Blvd. (parking pass required)

1. Head east (left) on Princeton Ave toward Geneva Ct.
2. Take the 3rd left onto Queens Road West
3. Turn left onto East Blvd.
4. Turn left into Freedom Park.

Total Travel Estimate: 1.07 miles - about 2 minutes



ACCOMMODATIONS & RESTAURANTS

CHARLOTTE AREA HOTELS

Hotels on McDowell Street
Located near S. Kings Drive
Higher rates

Days Inn
118 E. Woodlawn Road
Charlotte, NC 28217
704-525-5500
(recommended by past art vendors)

CHARLOTTE AREA CAMPGROUNDS

CHARLOTTE/FORT MILL KOA CAMPGROUND

I-77 South, Exit 88
940 Gold Hill Road
Fort Mill, SC
803-548-1148; 888-562-4430; www.koa.com

LAKESIDE LODGES & CAMPGROUND

8332 Regent Parkway
Fort Mill, SC 29715
803-547-3500; www.lakesidelodges.com

McDOWELL NATURE PRESERVE

15222 York Road
(Hwy. 49 South)
704-583-1284 for reservations

AREA RESTAURANTS

EAST BLVD AREA - BRIXX PIZZA, OUTBACK STEAKHOUSE, PIZZA HUT, MOE'S SOUTHWEST GRILL,
SHOWMARS, THAI THAI TAKE OUT, DOLCE RISTORANTE ITALIANO,
PIO PIO CHICKEN, STARBUCK'S COFFEE

PARK ROAD AREA - THE ROASTING COMPANY, CHICK-FIL-A, BRUEGGER'S BAGELS, CARIBOU COFFEE,
STARBUCKS, JASONS DELI, CHINESE, WENDY'S, McDONALD'S, FLYING BISCUIT

SOUTH KINGS DRIVE AREA - MAMA RICOTTAS, MELTING POT, GREAT HARVEST BREAD, ZOE'S,
DUNKIN DONUTS, CHINESE RESTAURANTS, AND MANY OTHERS IN METROPLITIAN COMPLEX

PROVIDENCE ROAD AREA - NAPA ON PROVIDENCE, FENWICKS

SOUTH BLVD. AREA - ARBY'S, KFC, BASILS, TRYON HOUSE

WOODLAWN ROAD AREA - AZTECA MEXICAN, BOJANGLES



**CHARLOTTE FIRE DEPARTMENT
FIRE MARSHAL'S OFFICE
500 DALTON AVE CHARLOTTE, NC 28206**

Tent Guidelines and Permitting Requirements

The guidelines established herein are based on provisions of the North Carolina Fire Code. Any proposed alternative measures to the requirements below shall provide an equal level of safety and shall require prior approval of the fire official. Tent and membrane structures must comply with all sections of the North Carolina Fire Code.

Permits:

The erection of any tent or canopy in *excess of 800 square feet* requires prior approval and an operational permit issued by the Charlotte Fire Department, Fire Prevention Bureau Office. Exceptions:

- Tents or canopies not exceeding 1,800 square feet that are open on all sides without sidewalls, drops or other physical obstructions on 75 percent or more of the perimeter.
- Tents or canopies used exclusively for camping or funeral services.

Before a permit is granted, a certificate must be submitted to the fire official certifying the tent is composed of materials meeting the flame propagation performance criteria of Test Method 1 or Test Method 2 of NFPA 701.

Additionally, any tent with an occupant load of 50 or more persons shall require the submittal of a detailed site plan, indicating seating and table arrangements, location of any stage and other interior structures, exit arrangements and location and type of heating and electrical equipment.

Access, Location and Parking:

Fire apparatus access roads shall be a minimum of 20 feet, and roads shall not be obstructed in any manner, including the parking of vehicles.

Tents shall not be located with-in 20 feet of lot lines, buildings, other tents or membrane structures, and internal combustion engines, with the following exceptions:

- Separation distances between tents and membrane structures NOT used for cooking is not required when aggregate floor area of the tents do not exceed 15,000 square feet;
- Tents need not be separated from buildings when ALL of the following conditions are met:
 1. The aggregate floor area of the tent or membrane structure shall not exceed 10,000 square feet;
 2. The aggregate area of the tent AND building shall not exceed the allowable floor area as indicated in the International Building Code.
 3. Required exiting is maintained for both the tent and building, including travel distances.
 4. Fire apparatus access roads are maintained.

Tents with an area of 15,000 square feet or more shall not be located closer than 50 feet from any building or other tent, except with connecting corridors between multiple tents.

Connecting corridors are allowed provided that an approved exit is located at each end of such corridor.

A fire break or access of not less than 12 feet shall be maintained on all sides of tents, unless otherwise approved by the fire official.

Tents shall be properly roped, braced and anchored to withstand the elements of weather and to guard against collapsing.

Means of Egress:

Means of egress from tents shall comply with the following:

- Exits shall be spaced at equal intervals as can be best accomplished.
- Any area of the tent shall be located within 100 feet of an exit.
- The required number and minimum width of exits shall be in accordance with the following:
 1. Occupant load (OL) 10 to 199: Minimum 2 exits, minimum 72 inches per exit.
 2. OL 200 to 499: Minimum 3 exits, 72 inches per exit.
 3. OL 500 to 999: Minimum 4 exits, 96 inches per exit.
 4. OL 1,000 to 1,999: Minimum 5 exits, 120 inches per exit; or 7 exits, 96 inches per exit.
 5. OL 2,000 to 2,999: Minimum 6 exits, 120 inches per exit; or 8 exits, 96 inches per exit.
 6. Over 3,000: Minimum 7 exits, 120 inches per exit; or 9 exits, 96 inches per exit. Note: For occupant loads exceeding 3,000, minimum exits shall be based on the total occupant load multiplied by 0.2 inches per person.
- Curtains over exit openings shall be of a color or colors that contrast the adjoining tent color, and curtains shall be on sliding metal supports, located a minimum of 80 inches above the floor surface. Curtains may be taped along edges with colored tape to achieve the contrast requirements stated above, if approved by the fire official.
- Exit doors, if required, shall open in the direction of travel.
- Proper aisle widths shall be maintained for theater-style seating. Consult with your fire inspector for further.
- Seats in theater-style seating arrangements with more than 200 chairs must be fastened together in groups of not less than three to create seat stability.
- Exit signs shall be clearly posted at each exit for tents serving an OL of 50 persons or more. Exit signs shall be either listed and labeled in accordance with UL 924 as the “internally illuminated” type, or externally illuminated in accordance with the following:
 1. For OL of 300 or less, two separate circuits, one of which is separate from all other circuits; or
 2. For OL of more than 300, two sources of power, one of which is an “emergency system” supplied by batteries or on-site generators, for a minimum of 90 minutes duration.
- Means of egress shall be illuminated at floor level during all times the tent is occupied. In most cases, the general lighting already available will satisfy this requirement.

Fire Protection Equipment:

Portable dry chemical fire extinguishers with a minimum 2A-10BC rating shall be provided so that travel distance does not exceed 75 from any point to an extinguisher.

Extinguishers shall have updated inspection tags (inspected annually) and shall be mounted on approved hangers. The hanging of extinguishers utilizing zip ties etc. is not acceptable.

Certain use conditions (fireworks sales, etc.) may require pressurized water extinguishers in addition to the dry chemical type.

Cooking Tents:

All cooking tents shall be provided with a Class K fire extinguisher.

Heating or warming of food utilizing solid fuel burning materials (i.e. Sterno fuel cans) shall be approved provided such use is not within 10 feet of an exit or combustible materials.

Cooking tents shall be separated from all other tents by a minimum of 20 feet.

Heating of Tents:

Heating of tents shall be accomplished by forced air, with the heating equipment located outside. LP gas containers for heating shall be located as follows:

- Containers with a capacity of 500 gallons or less shall be located a minimum of 10 feet from tent.
- Containers with a capacity of greater than 500 gallons shall be located a minimum of 25 feet from tent.
- All hoses for LP tanks shall be protected from physical damage, and LP gas tank valves shall be fully accessible and closed when not in use.

General:

Generators and other internal combustion power sources shall be located a minimum of 20 feet from tents, and protected from public contact by fencing, barricades, etc.

Combustible decorative material is strictly prohibited and floor service and area surrounding the exterior of the tent up to 30 feet shall be free of combustible material that may present a fire hazard.

Crowd managers shall be required at a ratio of 1 per 250 occupants.

CFD stand-by personnel will be required for tents with an occupant load of 300 persons or more