

# Fire Safety Guidelines

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## Role of the Seattle Fire Department

A Seattle Fire Department (SFD) Public Assembly Permit is required for exhibits, registration areas, any proposed obstruction of fire exits, and certain other activities in Exhibit Halls, Session Rooms, Lobbies, or Public Areas of the Washington State Convention Center (WSCC).

You must have an approved floor plan prior to selling or assigning booth space. It is important to start the approval process early, typically at least twelve months in advance of your event. All fire permit documents and information should be sent to your WSCC Event Manager, who will serve as the liaison between you and the Fire Marshal's office.

The information provided below is a general guideline of the policies and regulations pertaining to the usage of WSCC as a temporary public assembly. These regulations are described in Local and National Fire Code as applied by the Seattle Fire Department; as well as in the Seattle Building Code and WSCC Policy. Facility Clients, Exhibit Managers, Show Decorators, and/or General Service Contractors are responsible for ensuring compliance with these regulations. Please contact your Event Manager if you have questions regarding this information or the overall process.

## Fire Permit Approval Process

1. Send proposed floor plans to your Event Manager for facility review prior to booth sales or assignment.
2. Your Event Manager will forward the documents to the SFD for review.
3. Any changes required by SFD will be communicated by your Event Manager.
4. Send completed application to your WSCC Event Manager. Application materials should include:
  - Completed application form
  - Required fee – payable to the City of Seattle\*
  - Floor plans drawn to scale – 8.5"x11" .pdf format
  - Show name and contracted dates
  - Service contractor company and contact
5. The fire permit will be issued by SFD once all plans have been approved by SFD and WSCC.
6. Any changes to the floorplan must be sent to your Event Manager and approved by SFD and WSCC.
7. Failure to report changes or modifications is a violation of your Fire Permit Conditions and could result in a citation.
8. SFD may inspect show prior to the show opening and at random during the event.
9. Failure to comply with the Fire Permit Conditions may result in SFD citation or cause doors to be held until compliance is achieved.

*\* Important: Permit applications received less than 10 days prior to the event for which they are being used will be assessed an additional late permit surcharge of 50% of the original permit fee. Applications received 3 business days or less prior to the event may not be processed and the permit not issued.*

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## Minimum Floor Plan Requirements

### General Requirements

Any deviations from the minimum requirements described in this section are subject to the approval of your Event Manager and SFD. Circumstances that are not addressed herein will be subject to review by WSCC and SFD.

The location of the following items must be shown on all floorplans submitted for approval:

- All fire exits and primary entrances
- All aisle locations and dimensions
- All installed equipment (counters, stages, service desks, entry units, fill-in desks, etc.)
- Food service, catering and/or concession areas
- Storage, boneyards, draped off or masked areas
- Temporary illuminated exit signs with appropriate directional arrows as needed
- Additional signage to indicate obscured fire extinguishers or hose cabinets

### Exhibit Halls

Your Event Manager can provide maximum booth configurations that comply with the requirements as described below.

- Booth layout in a north/south configuration
- Booths numbered in “addressable” configuration
- Continuous and unobstructed aisles as described below
  - (1) 12 foot wide east/west cross aisle **OR**
  - (2) 10 foot wide east/west cross aisles separated by at least 40 feet **AND**
  - (1) 10 foot wide perimeter aisle
- Additionally, the following unobstructed and straight 10 foot wide north/south aisles are required:
  - 4A or 4B ..... (4) aisles
  - 4AB or 4BC ..... (5) aisles
  - 4ABC ..... (6) aisles
  - 4C ..... (2) aisles
  - 4D ..... (See Usable Space requirements)
  - 4E ..... (4) aisles
  - 4F ..... (4) aisles
  - 4EF ..... (5) aisles
- Individual exhibits 300 square feet or more may be required to submit a booth plan.
- Exit(s) that are obscured by drape, screens or other equipment:
  - must be approved by SFD;
  - must include a baffle or break in the drape;
  - must have installed an illuminated exit sign(s) with appropriate directional arrow;
  - must maintain a clear path to the affected exit(s).
- “WSCC Use” Food & Beverage areas indicated in standard booth configuration diagrams cannot be used without the written permission of your Event Manager and Catering Sales.
- Roll-up gates and airwalls to the loading dock or service corridors must be kept clear and closed during event hours.

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## Meeting Rooms and Ballrooms

- All meeting rooms are subject to maximum occupancy load as dictated by code.
- All rooms occupied by more than 49 persons require at least two alternate exits.
- Chairs set theater style must be connected or “ganged” together.
- Consult your Event Manager for aisle requirements.
- Exit(s) that are obscured by drape, screens or other equipment:
  - must be approved by SFD;
  - must include a baffle or break in the drape;
  - must have installed an illuminated exit sign(s) with appropriate directional arrow;
  - must be kept clear and marked with white gaffers tape or rope lights.

## Lobbies and Public Areas

- Registration layout is required before a fire permit can be issued.
- Configuration must comply with Usable Space guidelines.
- Entry unit(s) size and location must be approved by your Event Manager before installation.
  - Must be shown on submitted floor plans.
  - Support columns cannot obstruct entry doors or escalator paths.
  - Center support cannot exceed ½ meter square.
- Items such as tables, meter boards, easels, poster boards, etc. placed in meeting room corridors cannot obstruct egress through the corridors.
- Catering Service locations must be indicated on submitted floor plans.
- Attractions or equipment that would restrict egress are prohibited at escalator landings.

## Other Items Requiring Fire Department Review or Permit

Each of the items as described below pertains to show management, contractors, as well as individual exhibitors. It is the responsibility of facility clients and show contractors to communicate these requirements to exhibitors by way of the Exhibitor Services Manual or other means.

## Combustible Storage

Packing material, empty boxes, cardboard, or other combustible storage are prohibited throughout exhibit halls.

- No combustible storage is allowed:
  - Inside booth spaces
  - Behind the drape of an individual booth
  - In unsold or dead areas of the show floor.
- Full boxes of brochures and other literature for distribution may be stored in a booth as follows:
  - Any allowable literature storage must be stored at least 18 inches away from ignition sources;
  - Under (1) 8ft table fronting the booth space;
  - Inside a hard wall storage closet within a booth.

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## Compressed Gas

All usage of compressed gas in the Center must be coordinated with your Event Manager. This includes usage or storage of fuel for gas powered equipment (e.g. forklifts).

- Helium or Nitrogen tanks are allowed on the event floor under the following conditions:
  - Prior approval by SFD;
  - Tanks must be properly labeled for contents;
  - Firmly secured in the upright position;
  - Valves protected against damage.
- Nitrous Oxide and Oxygen tanks
  - less than 250 cubic feet are allowed under the conditions as described above
  - over 250 cubic feet are not allowed in the Center
- LPG (Liquefied Propane Gas) and CNG (Compressed Natural Gas) are prohibited in the Center during event activity.
- Butane tanks are limited to (1) 10 ounce canister. (see Cooking)
- Usage of any other type or amount of compressed gas will be evaluated case-by-case by SFD.

## Cooking

Cooking in the Convention Center must be approved in advance by your Event Manager and Catering Sales Manager.

- Butane canisters may be used in conjunction with tabletop burners.
  - Each exhibit booth is limited to one (1) 10 ounce Butane canister
  - Additional canisters must be secured outside the building in an area that is approved by the Convention Center.
- Deep fat fryers may be used under the following conditions:
  - Maximum capacity of one (1) gallon;
  - Readily available UL "Class K" fire extinguisher;
  - Metal cover capable of covering the deep fat fryer.
  - Capacity exceeding one (1) gallon requires SFD approval

## Covered Booths

A covered booth is one that has any material, object, or structure placed over or upon the exhibit, such as a roof, canopy, tent, Moss® fabric, etc. Detailed requirements for review and approval of a covered booth will be provided by your Event Manager.

- Approval process should begin at least three (3) months in advance.
- Submit scale drawings to Event Manager.
- Drawings must show exact square footage calculation of covered area
- 101 – 299 square feet must be equipped with:
  - (1) "2A 10BC" rated fire extinguisher
  - Smoke detector placed at the highest point
  - Means of turning off electrical power to the booth during non-show hours
- 300 square feet or more must be equipped with:
  - all requirements as listed above
  - Temporary automatic fire suppression sprinkler system must be installed for covered area.

## Entry Units

Entry unit(s) size and location must be approved by your Event Manager before installation.

- Must be shown on submitted floor plans.
- Support columns cannot obstruct entry doors or escalator paths.
- Center support cannot exceed ½ meter square.

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## Fire Watch/Guard

Fire watch/guard is not required at the Center, our life safety system and Security Control officers monitor the facility on a 24/7 basis. Fire watch/guard may not be substituted for requirements of a covered or multi-level booth or other fire-regulated condition.

## Flame Proofing

All decorations, carpeting, drapes, signs, banners, plastic displays, or other combustible items must be inherently flame resistant or treated with a flame proofing substance. Verification of flame proofing in accordance with NFPA 701 or State of California Fire Marshal must be left in the booth for the duration of the show for SFD inspection. Your Event Manager can provide contact information for local companies that provide onsite flame proofing services.

- Acceptable verification of flame resistance include:
  - A tag or label affixed to the item by the manufacturer indicating it meets standards.
  - Valid Certificate of Flame Resistance from a third party or manufacturer of the item.
- Evidence of self-treatment of items by aerosol spray or other means is not acceptable.
- Items which are not accompanied by a verification of flame proofing must be removed prior to the show opening.
- Oilcloth, tarpaper, sisal paper, nylon, Orlon and certain synthetic materials, which cannot be made flame resistant, are prohibited.
- Wood panels or crates more than ¼ inch thickness are considered inherently flame resistant.

## Multi-Level Booths

A multi-level booth is one with a second level or tier of any size constructed above the exhibit or portion of the exhibit, which is accessed by stairs and can be occupied by persons.

- Approval process should begin at least (4) months in advance.
- Submit scale drawings to Event Manager in 8.5"x 11" .pdf format.
- Drawings must show exact square footage calculation of upper deck
- All requirements for Covered Booths will apply.
- Temporary Structure Permit from the Seattle Department of Planning and Development may be required.
- Temporary automatic fire suppression sprinkler system must be installed for covered portion(s) and connected to WSCC life safety system by our approved supplier.
- An exhibit that fails to comply with these regulations will not be allowed to install for the event.

## Open Flame

An Open Flame Permit may be required for any open flame or candle during your event. You must inform your Event Manager if there is to be any open flame during your show.

- Sterno does not require a permit.
- Candles provided by ARAMARK are pre-approved by SFD.
- Other candles used as décor for banquets must be reviewed by your Event Manager and SFD.
- Exhibitors using candles in their booth must submit an Open Flame permit application to SFD.

## Special Effects

- Pyrotechnics, flame performances, or fireworks are not allowed in the Center
- Lasers may be used without a permit
- Fog or Haze machines may be used for stage productions without permit under the following conditions:
  - Event Manager must be notified at least (14) days in advance.
  - Must use water-based fluid.
  - Specific schedule of fog or haze usage must be coordinated with Event Manager.
  - Fog or Haze Machines are not permitted in individual exhibit booths without pre-approval.

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## Structures Over 48 Inches

Any structure over 48 inches in height that will be occupied by one or more person(s) is considered a site built structure. The process for approval of site built structures should be started with your Event Manager at least six months in advance of your event.

A Seattle Department of Planning and Development (DPD) Temporary Structure Permit may be required for the following.

- Multi-level booths
- Stages, platforms or risers exceeding 48"
- Bleachers or tiered seating
- Scaffold for projectors or lighting is exempted, unless occupied by an operator.

## Vehicles

- Displayed vehicles must be indicated on floor plans for Fire Marshal approval.
- Schedule for delivery and removal must be submitted to your Event Manager
- Fuel in tanks is limited to a maximum of ¼ tank or (5) gallons, whichever is less.
- Diesel fuel tanks are limited to a maximum of ¼ of a tank.
- Vehicles with no or non-functioning fuel gauges will not be allowed in public assembly areas without prior approval by the Fire Marshal.
- Battery cables must be disconnected, with the cable ends taped over to prevent sparking.
- Fuel tank fill caps must be either lockable or taped shut.
- Interior latch release, if so equipped, must be disabled.
- Visqueen must protect the flooring.
- Vehicles may not be moved during event hours.