



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



Trade Show/Exhibit Requirements

The guidelines established herein are intended to meet the minimum guidelines established in the North Carolina Fire Code. Special conditions may warrant additional or more stringent guidelines as the fire official deems necessary in order to ensure the safety of the public.

Permits/Plans

A Charlotte Fire Department permit is required for a public exhibition or trade show event that has an expected attendance over 400 people. This shall include the completion and submittal of an "Exhibition and Trade Show Permit Application", along with submittal of two sets of plans, drawn to scale, mailed to our office located at 500 Dalton Avenue, Charlotte, NC 28206. It can also be emailed to Marlene Garcia at Marlene.Garcia@charlottenc.gov. Our office must receive the completed permit application and associated fee, along with the plans no less than 15 days prior to the start of the show or exhibition. The following information shall be included on the plans:

- Name, location, time and dates of the event
- The locations and widths of all exits and exit access aisles
- The locations of exit signs
- The locations of all display booths, exhibits, cooking equipment, stages and any other fixed displays or structures
- The location of any covered or multiple-level booths
- Construction documents for any covered or multiple-level booths
- The location of fire alarm pull-stations, notification appliances and other fire protection equipment
- The location of hazardous materials, compressed gases or other highly combustible goods that may be utilized, as approved by the fire official
- The location and type of any vehicle displays

Site Inspection and Approval

Once plans are reviewed and deemed compliant, a conditional approval will be granted, pending payment of the permit fee and a final site inspection by the fire code official. Once the payment is received, the site inspection will be scheduled with the promoter and/or event coordinator for the venue prior to the show or exhibit opening. Final approval must be granted before the public is allowed in the building or show area. The fire code official has the authority to require certain measures be taken for conditions that may impact public safety. Additionally, the fire official has



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the authority to close a show and/or cause the immediate evacuations for any circumstances that is deemed as a life-safety condition.

Specific Guidelines

Vehicles inside structure

- Motor fuel-operated vehicles used for display shall have less than ¼ tank or 5 gallons, whichever is less.
- Batteries shall be disconnected.
- Fuel access points shall be closed and sealed to prevent unauthorized tampering.
- Vehicles shall not be de-fueled or re-fueled while inside the structure.

Use of propane or other flammable gases

- Cylinder size shall be limited to an individual maximum size of 2 ½ pounds and the total aggregate quantity shall not exceed 200 pounds.
- Readily combustible materials shall not be kept in the same area as the gases in storage or use.
- Cylinders shall not be stored in any exit enclosure, at any exit door or in the path of direct access to an exit.

Special Operations

- Operations of warming food utilizing solid fuel burners are allowed provided they are not located where they can ignite combustible materials.
- Cooking demonstrations must follow the guidelines of the *“Trade Show On-Premise Cooking Regulations”* found below.

Decorative Material

- Decorative material, including drapes or curtains, shall be of a flame-retardant material. This shall not apply to items actually for sale, but rather material used or installed simply for decorative purposes, such as wall coverings, thatch material, etc.
 - Inflatables must also be of flame retardant material.
- If any material is rendered flame-retardant by the user, via the use of a commercially produced product, a letter shall be provided to the fire official indicating so and shall include the name and type of product used.

Trade Show On-Premise Cooking Regulations

A written description that outlines the on-premise cooking request shall be submitted in advance to the facility event manager. Approval will be provided to the company or



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organization in writing from the facility. On-premise cooking must meet all the following regulations:

- Heat producing appliances must be UL listed.
- The use of any cooking appliances must meet the manufacture's requirements.
- Appliances must emit 5 mg/m³ or less of grease laden vapors when tested at an exhaust flow rate of 500 cfm in accordance with UL 710B. Any cooking device not meeting this requirement cannot be used. Documentation may be requested to verify compliance.
- Appliances shall be isolated from the public by at least 4 feet (from an aisle) or by a barrier.
- Appliances shall be limited to 288 square inches of cooking surface area.
- Appliances shall be placed on non-combustible surface material.
- A (1.5-gallon) Class K fire extinguisher is needed for each cooking station.
- Operations such as warming of foods, cooking demonstrations & similar operations that use solid flammables, butane or other similar devices which do not pose an ignition hazard, shall be approved. Electrical cooking & heating equipment shall comply with the ICC Electrical Code. Cooking & heating equipment shall not be located within 10 feet of exits.
- Open-flame devices are prohibited.
- Flammable or combustible liquids used in the preparation of flaming foods or beverages shall be dispensed from a 1-ounce container or a container not exceeding 1-quart capacity with a controlled pouring device that will limit the flow to a 1-ounce serving. Containers shall be secured to prevent spillage when not in use.
- Cooking equipment shall be separated from combustible materials display or storage by a horizontal distance of not less than 5 ft.