



## Permits for Temporary Structures

### No. 5406

**Policy Effective Date:**  
2/27/2002

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**Policy Owner:**  
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**Affected Parties:**  
Undergraduate  
Graduate  
Faculty  
Staff

**1.0 Purpose**  
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### 1.0 Purpose

The Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code (VUSBC) and the Virginia Statewide Fire Prevention Code (VSFPC) require that the university regulate the erection and use of temporary structures for the purpose of ensuring the safety of all persons using the structures. The purpose of this policy is to provide the necessary specifications to allow the university to successfully manage this responsibility.

To achieve this purpose, the following objectives must be met:

- All temporary structures erected on Virginia Tech property shall be designed, constructed, erected, and used in accordance with the VUSBC and VSFPC.
- The University Building Official shall manage the permitting and inspection of temporary structures to ensure compliance with the VUSBC.
- The manner of occupancy and use of equipment in, and in the vicinity of, temporary structures shall be in accordance with reasonable and appropriate restrictions established to ensure the safety of the occupants and nearby persons. The University Building Official shall enforce these restrictions.

### 2.0 Policy

Temporary structures, which are erected on Virginia Tech property and are not a part of an existing structure, must have a Permit/Temporary Certificate of Use. This applies to:

- Tents
  - Greater than 900 square feet (or, greater than 900 square feet for the combined square footage of multiple tents located within 20 feet of each other), or
  - Tents with an occupancy exceeding 50 persons
- Events when participants are anticipated to exceed 300 people held within a temporary structure of any type.
- All stages and platforms
- Any structure to be located within 20 feet of another structure, equipment, or plantings
- All construction trailers
- Any similar temporary structures

All amusement devices as defined by the Virginia Amusement Device Regulations (VADR) such as, but not limited to, climbing walls, bouncy houses, zip lines, Ferris wheels, and other motor-driven rotating machines must also have a Permit/Temporary Certificate of Use.



## **3.0 Procedures**

### **3.1 Permit/Temporary Certificate of Use for a Temporary Structure**

#### **3.1.1 Enforcement**

The University Building Official is responsible for enforcing the requirements of the Permit/Temporary Certificate of Use for a Temporary Structure.

#### **3.1.2 Application**

A request for a Permit/Temporary Certificate of Use for a Temporary Structure must be submitted to the University Building Official at least ten (10) business days, preferably 30 days, prior to the date of erection. Applications submitted within ten (10) business days of the proposed erection, may be denied with no further justification.

#### **3.1.3 Application Information**

The information required from the applicant, and the application process for the request for a Permit/Temporary Certificate of Use for a Temporary Structure can be obtained on the Permits for Temporary Structures website (<https://www.facilities.vt.edu/university-building-official/forms/temporary-structures-permits.html> ).

Additional information may be obtained by contacting the University Building Official's Office.

Additional information may be required based on review of the information submitted.

#### **3.1.4 Issuance of a Permit/Temporary Certificate of Use**

After review and approval of the application information, the University Building Official shall issue a Permit/Temporary Certificate of Use. The University Building Official will provide a copy of the Permit/Temporary Certificate of Use to the applicant upon issue.

## **3.2 Temporary Structures**

### **3.2.1 No Erection Without a Permit/Temporary Certificate of Use**

No temporary structures shall be erected before the issuance of the Permit/Temporary Certificate of Use, unless otherwise authorized by the University Building Official.

### **3.2.2 Erected by Qualified Personnel**

The temporary structures must be erected by qualified personnel and in compliance with the criteria on the approved application for the Permit/Temporary Certificate of Use.

### **3.2.3 Location of Temporary Structures**

#### **3.2.3.1 Underground Utilities**

If the surface of the ground will be penetrated by anchors, posts or other support devices, the applicant must contact Virginia 811 by calling 811 at least three working days prior to the date the temporary structure be erected, to ensure that all underground utilities located in the vicinity have been properly located.



### **3.2.3.2 Existing Buildings**

Temporary structures must be located at least twenty (20) feet from existing buildings and structures. If an existing means of egress or emergency access is to be blocked or impaired, an alternate means of egress or emergency access must be provided. Existing buildings shall include exterior mechanical equipment such as HVAC systems, propane tanks, etc.

### **3.2.3.3 Grouped Tents**

Tents located within ten (10) feet of each other may be considered by the University Building Official as one virtual tent based on the nature of the site, nature of the tent, and specifics of the erection.

### **3.2.4 Time Period of Erection**

The temporary structure must not be erected more than 2 days prior to the event and removed no later than 2 days after the event to avoid creating a hazard or an attractive nuisance unless written approval has been granted by a representative of Facilities Operations.

### **3.2.5 Posting of Permit/Temporary Certificate of Use**

The applicant must ensure that a copy of the Permit/Temporary Certificate of Use for a Temporary Structure is available or posted at a clearly visible location on the tent or at the site for the duration of the use of the equipment.

## **3.3 Maintenance and Use of the Temporary Structure**

### **3.3.1 Inspection**

Prior to use, the University Building Official, in cooperation with other state agencies and university staff such as Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) when appropriate, will inspect to ensure that the temporary structure, as well as supporting equipment such as food vendors, generators, lighting, safety barriers, etc., are erected, used, and maintained in accordance with the VUSBC and VSFPC. The temporary structure may also be further inspected during operation by EHS. No close-out inspection is required unless there is a question or issue. The applicant shall notify the University Building Official when the structure is removed or return the permit noted as removed.

### **3.3.2 Abatement of Hazardous Use**

Any conditions that are inconsistent with the Permit/Temporary Certificate of Use and any hazards identified must be immediately corrected, or the Permit/Temporary Certificate of Use will be revoked, and the temporary structure must be removed.

### **3.3.3 Open Flame Restrictions**

Open flames, space heaters, and food cooking/heating devices (except approved electrical appliances) are not permitted under or within twenty (20) feet of any tent. This restriction will be enforced by EHS.

## **4.0 Definitions**

## **5.0 References**

Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code (VUSBC)

<https://www.dhcd.virginia.gov/virginia-uniform-statewide-building-code-usbc>



## Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

Virginia Statewide Fire Prevention Code (VSFPC)

<https://www.dhcd.virginia.gov/statewide-fire-prevention-code>

Virginia Amusement Device Regulations (VADR)

<https://www.dhcd.virginia.gov/amusement-device>

Permits for Temporary Structures

<https://www.facilities.vt.edu/university-building-official/forms/temporary-structures-permits.html>

University Policy 5407, University Building Official Office

<http://www.policies.vt.edu/5407.pdf>

## 6.0 Approval and Revisions

Approved February 27, 2002 by Vice President for Administration and Treasurer, Raymond D. Smoot, Jr.

- Revision 1  
Section 2 – Added “All tents require notification to Environmental Health and Safety Services a minimum of 7 days in advance of setup.”  
Approved January 27, 2003 by Vice President for Administration and Treasurer, Raymond D. Smoot, Jr.
- Revision 2  
Minor updates to departmental titles.  
Approved April 20, 2004 by Vice President for Business Affairs, Kurt J. Krause.
- Revision 3
  - Updated policy throughout to reflect the role of the new University Building Official, which removes the role of the Department of General Services. Environmental Health and Safety Services are still part of the inspection process, but the enforcement authority and responsibility are stated as belonging fully to the University Building Official.
  - Section 3.1.3 – Added a reference that the information required from the applicant for the request for a Permit/Temporary Certificate of Use for a Temporary Facility/Tent/Stage can be obtained at the Office of the University Building Official website ([www.ubo.vt.edu](http://www.ubo.vt.edu)) or the Facilities website ([www.facilities.vt.edu](http://www.facilities.vt.edu)).
  - Section 3.2.3 – Changed the section title to “Location of Tents and Stages” and added subsections 3.2.3.1, 3.2.3.2, and 3.2.3.3.
  - Section 3.2.5 – Updated to state that the applicant must ensure that a copy of the Permit/Temporary Certificate of Use for a Temporary Structure/Tent/Stage is posted at a clearly visible location on the tent or at the site for the duration of the use of the facility.
  - Section 4 – Deleted reference to state manuals.

Approved December 7, 2010 by Vice President for Administrative Services, Sherwood G. Wilson.
- Revision 4
  - Updated the policy title and language throughout to include the University Building Official’s role in regulating the erection and use of temporary amusement devices.
  - Section 3.2.3.1 – Clarified when an applicant is required to contact Miss Utility of Virginia.



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- Section 3.3.1 – Deleted reference to State Fire Marshall Office and clarified the inspection roles of the University Building Official and Environmental Health and Safety before, during, and after the temporary facility/tent/stage/amusement device is erected.
- Section 3.3.1 – Added “No close out inspection is required unless there is a question or issue. The applicant shall notify the University Building Official when the tent/stage/amusement device is removed or return the permit noted as removed.”
- Section 3.3.3 – Clarified that open flame restrictions will be enforced by Environmental Health and Safety.
- Section 4 – Updated links and added appropriate references to Virginia Amusement Device Regulations and University Policy 5407, University Building Official Office.

Approved January 5, 2017 by Vice President for Administration, Sherwood G. Wilson.

- Revision 5
  - Updated Policy title to Permits for Temporary Structures.
  - Replaced “temporary facilities, tents, stages, and amusement devices”, with “temporary structures” throughout the policy.
  - Section 2- Revised the section to include specific temporary structures.
  - Section 2 – Updated “Virginia Amusement Code” to “Virginia Amusement Device Regulations (VADR)”.
  - Section 3.1- Updated the section title to Permit/Temporary Certificate of Use for a Temporary Structure.
  - Section 3.1.2 Application – Added “preferably 30 days”.
  - Section 3.1.3- Added “and the application process”.
  - Section 3.1.3- Deleted the facilities website link and added the link to the Permits for Temporary Structures website.
  - Section 3.2- Updated the section title to Temporary Structures.
  - Section 3.2.3- Updated the section title to Location of Temporary Structures.
  - Section 3.2.3.1 – Updated the contact information for Miss Utility of Virginia at 800-552-7001 to Virginia 811 by calling 811. Updated the number of days from five to three, that Virginia 811 should be contacted prior to the date a temporary structure is erected.
  - Section 3.3-Updated the section title to Maintenance and Use of the Temporary Structure.
  - Section 5 – Updated referenced websites for the Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code (VUSBC), Virginia Statewide Fire Prevention Code (VSFPC), and the Virginia Amusement Device Regulations (VADR). Removed the Facilities Website reference and website, replaced with Permits for Temporary Structures with website.

Approved April 3, 2025 by Vice President for Facilities, Dwyn Taylor.