



Special Amusement Structures/Halloween Houses

Haunted Houses 2015

The following information and code references are provided as a guideline to both internal and external customers concerning special amusement structures. It is not an official code interpretation or department policy. The local fire department or authority having jurisdiction (AHJ) retains fire prevention authority over these structures. A municipal fire or building code official may allow a building or portion of a building to be used temporarily in a manner that differs from the approved use for the building or space, or may approve a temporary building to be used by the public, subject to all of the provisions stipulated in SPS 314 .01 (5) or SPS 361.03 (12) for temporary use.

1. Vehicles parked/placed a minimum 20 feet from structure. [NFPA 1 (2012) 18.2.3 Fire Department Access Roads]
2. Use decorations and wall coverings that are flame retardant and meet with the approval of the AHJ. Where decorations are used they should be kept well away from all heat sources, light bulbs, heaters, etc. [NFPA 1 (2012) 20.1.2 Flame Retardant Requirements]
3. Purchase only those costumes, wigs and props labeled as flame resistant or retardant. Costumes should be made without billowing or long trailing features that present a higher risk of ignition. [See #2]
4. "No Smoking" signs shall be displayed and no open flames, candles, torch lights or other sources of ignition shall be present. Flashlights should be used where appropriate. [SPS 314.20 Open Flames]
5. Fire extinguishers, both type and placement shall comply with NFPA 10. [NFPA 1 (2012) 13.6 Portable Fire Extinguishers]
6. No flammable or combustible liquids allowed within 50 feet of structure. [NFPA 1 (2012) Chapter 66, NFPA 30 (2010) Chapter 15]
7. No LPG tanks or cylinders shall be allowed in the structure or within 25 feet of the structure. [NFPA 58 (2011) 8.3 Storage Within Buildings.
8. Housekeeping shall be maintained at all times with no straw, hay, cornstalks or dried flowers, etc. allowed in the structure. [NFPA 1 (2012) 20.1.2 Flame Retardant Requirements]
9. Structure should have a setback of 20 feet from property line and any other structures. [NFPA 1 (2012) 18.2.3 Fire Department Access Roads]
10. Structure shall meet load requirements. (Live, dead and wind loads). [SPS 362, SPS 366, IBC 2009]
11. Two exits shall be required with the standard exit door requirement being met. In addition, all exit passageways shall be a minimum of 36 inches wide, with a minimum of 0.2 ft-candle (2.2 lux) required for illumination of the walking surfaces during periods of performances or projections involving directed light. The AHJ may modify the illumination requirement for walking surfaces by using attendants. [NFPA 1 (2012) 14.1 Egress Requirements]
12. Exit markings (In special amusement buildings where mazes, mirrors, or other designs are used to confound the egress path, approved directional exit marking that becomes apparent in an emergency shall be provided). [NFPA 1 (2012) 20.1.4.7.3 Exit Marking]
13. Electrical wiring and components shall meet the requirements of SPS 316/NEC70. Extension cords may be used according to SPS 314 and NFPA 1 (2012).
14. Smoke detection required. Where the nature of the special amusement building is such that it operates in reduced lighting levels, the building shall be protected throughout by an approved automatic smoke detection system. [NFPA 1 (2012) 20.1.4.4 Smoke Detection]
15. Sufficient attendants shall be present on-site to conduct emergency operations in case of fire or medical emergency. [NFPA 1 (2012) 20.1.5.6, 20.1.5.7, 20.1.5.8 and Appendix, Crowd Managers]
16. Life safety hazards such as, but not limited to the generation of artificial fog are subject to the approval of the AHJ. [NFPA 1 (2012) 10.1 General Safety Requirements]
17. Surfaces for walking shall be well drained and kept free of debris, obstructions, projections, tripping hazards and other such hazards. Stair treads, etc, shall meet the rate of rise and tread according to Wisconsin Administrative Code. [IBC 2009, NFPA 1 (2012) 20.1.5.1.1 Means of Egress Inspection]

NFPA 1 (2012) 3.3.30.10* Special Amusement Building. A building that is temporary, permanent, or mobile and contains a device or system that conveys passengers or provides a walkway along, around, or over a course in any direction as a form of amusement arranged so that the egress path is not readily apparent due to visual or audio distractions or an intentionally confounded egress path, or is not readily available due to the mode of conveyance through the building or structure. [101, 2012]

(*Special amusement buildings include amusements such as a haunted house, a roller coaster–type ride within a building, a multilevel play structure within a building, a submarine ride, and similar amusements where the occupants are not in the open air).

NFPA 1 (2012) 3.3.182.3* Assembly Occupancy. An occupancy (1) used for a gathering of 50 or more persons for deliberation, worship, entertainment, eating, drinking, amusement, awaiting transportation, or similar uses; or (2) used as a special amusement building, regardless of occupant load. [101, 2012]

(*Assembly occupancies are characterized by the presence or potential presence of crowds with attendant panic hazard in case of fire or other emergency. They are generally open or occasionally open to the public, and the occupants, who are present voluntarily, are not ordinarily subject to discipline or control. Such buildings are ordinarily occupied by able-bodied persons and are not used for sleeping purposes).

SPS 314.01 (5) TEMPORARY USE. A municipal fire or building code official may permit a building or structure to be used temporarily by the public, subject to all of the following provisions:

- (a) The official shall determine the time frame within which the temporary use is permitted, based on the extent hazards are created by the temporary use. This time frame may not exceed 180 days, except the official may grant extensions for demonstrated cause.
- (b) Except as provided in par. (c), buildings or spaces considered for temporary use shall conform to the requirements of this code as necessary to ensure the public safety, health and general welfare.
- (c) The official may require additional safety requirements for a temporary use as a tradeoff for any safety provisions that may be lacking.
- (d) The official may terminate the approval for a temporary use at any time and order immediate discontinuance of the use or complete evacuation of the building or space. [SPS 361.03 (12)]

Note: The Department and other state agencies may have additional rules that affect the design, construction, inspection, maintenance, and use of public buildings, places of employment and premises, including chapters SPS 305, Credentials; SPS 307, Explosives and Fireworks; SPS 316, Electrical; SPS 318, Elevators, Escalators and Lift Devices; SPS 340, Gas Systems; SPS 341, Boilers and Pressure Vessels; SPS 343, Anhydrous Ammonia; SPS 345, Mechanical Refrigeration; SPS 361 to 366, Commercial Building Code; SPS 375 to 379, Buildings Constructed Prior to 1914; SPS 381 to 387, Plumbing; SPS 390, Public Swimming Pools and Water Attractions; and SPS 391, Sanitation. The Department's Division of Industry Services administers all of these listed codes.

NFPA 1 (2012) 10.9 Emergency Plans.

10.9.1 Where Required. Emergency plans shall be provided for high-rise, health care, ambulatory health care, residential board and care, assembly, day-care centers, special amusement buildings, hotels and dormitories, detention and correctional occupancies, educational, underground and windowless structures, facilities storing or handling materials covered by Chapter 60, or where required by the AHJ.

10.9.2 Plan Requirements.

10.9.2.1* Emergency plans shall include the following:

- (1) Procedures for reporting of emergencies
- (2) Occupant and staff response to emergencies
- (3)*Evacuation procedures appropriate to the building, its occupancy, and emergencies (*see Section 4.3 of NFPA 101*)
- (4) Appropriateness of the use of elevators
- (5) Design and conduct of fire drills
- (6) Type and coverage of building fire protection systems
- (7) Other items required by the AHJ