

Stanford University Fire Marshals Office

Haunted House Planning Information

SCOPE

These regulations shall apply to temporary Haunted Houses, Ghost Walks, or similar amusement buildings where decorative material and confusing sounds and/or visual effects are present.

Definitions

For the purposes of this standard, certain terms and words are defined as follows:

Haunted House: A temporary or permanent building or structure, or portion of a building or structure which contains a system provides a walkway or a transport system through a course so arranged that the means of egress are not apparent due to theatrical (and or decorative) distractions and or not visible due to low illumination, are disguised or are not readily available.

Ghost Walks: Similar to the Haunted House and may include inside and outside portions where egress to a public way is obscured or limited.

Public Way: An open area that connects directly with the sidewalk or road without further barrier.

REFERENCES

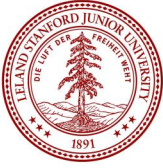
2001 California Building Code, 2001 California Fire Code, and California code of Regulations, Title 19.

Santa Clara County will require a permit.

Below the permit application process is described.

PERMITS

1. A permit application shall be submitted to this office a minimum of two (2) weeks prior to the event to allow time for review of the plans and scheduling of an inspection appointment. An inspection shall be required for final approval. The permit fee is \$237.00 and must be paid at the time the application is submitted. Haunted House permits need to be applied for in person at the County Government Center, East Wing, Fire Marshal's Office 7th floor, 70 West Heading Street San Jose. The phone number is (408) 299-5760
2. Special event permits shall remain active for a maximum period of thirty (30) days only. Request for extensions must be submitted to this office in writing.
3. Permit application packet should include the following:
 - A) Dimensional site plan shall indicate proximity of event building to other structures or hazardous areas, and path of travel from event building to the public way.



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B) Floor plan showing the following:

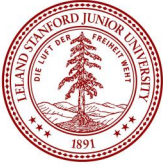
1. Dimensions (total square footage, width of exits, aisles or interior exit pathways, etc.)
2. Location of exits, exit signs, and emergency lighting units
3. Location of fire extinguishers
4. Location of electrical panel(s) and light switches
5. Location of smoke detectors and/or fire alarm panel
6. Normal use of structure (i.e.: auditorium, school, church, etc.)
7. Staff positions

C) Written evacuation plan (see 'Emergency Planning' section below).

REQUIREMENTS

1. *Emergency Planning:*

- A) Maximum occupant load (which shall include staff) shall be determined during plan review. A sign stating maximum occupant capacity shall be posted in a visible location near the entrance, and staff shall control the flow of patrons so as not to exceed this limit.
- B) A written evacuation plan shall be provided with permit application packet. All employees shall be trained in emergency procedures.
- C) Evacuation plan shall include training of staff and familiarization with fire alarm tone. Specific personnel shall be designated to turn off all distracting noises (i.e.: sound system) and turn on lights when alerted by either fire alarm ton or otherwise notified of an emergency condition.
- D) This event shall be staffed adequately to both control the occupant load and assist patrons in exiting should an evacuation become necessary. Staffing level shall be determined upon review of plans and may be increased at the discretion of the inspector.
- E) All employees shall carry flashlights and know the location of all exits, fire extinguishers, light switches, electrical panels, and emergency phones.
- F) A fire drill may be required.



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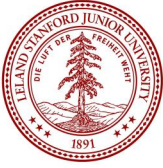
- G) Phone communication shall be readily available for the purpose of calling 911 in the event of an emergency.

2. Exits:

- A) Two exits shall be provided from each room with an occupant load of 50 or more. Required exit doors shall swing in the direction of egress.
- B) Illuminated exit signs shall be provided at each exit serving an occupant load of 50 or more.
- C) Panic hardware shall be provided for all exit doors serving an occupant load of 50 or more.
- D) Emergency lighting shall be provided in exit pathways.
- E) Exhibits and decorative materials shall not obstruct, confuse, or obscure exits, exit pathways, exit signs, or emergency lighting units.

3. Fire Protection:

- A) Provide and maintain manually activated device(s) suitable for sounding an alarm. Alarm shall be distinctive in tone and audible throughout amusement area.
- B) UL approved smoke detectors shall be provided throughout buildings housing haunted houses and similar events.
- C) An approved automatic fire sprinkler system shall be provided for all venues that exceed 1,000 square feet.
- D) Fire extinguishers shall be:
 - 1. Minimum 2A10BC rated.
 - 2. Properly mounted (top of unit between 3 and 5 feet from floor).
 - 3. Visible and accessible at all times.
 - 4. Located within 75 feet travel distance from anywhere in the building.
 - 5. Clearly illuminated or marked with reflective tape.
- E) Decorative material shall not obstruct fire sprinklers, fire extinguishes, or any other fire protection equipment.



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4. *Electrical:*

- A) Extension cords shall be of heavy commercial type, UL approved, in good condition, and shall be appropriate for its use. (No zip cords)
- B) Only UL approved power strips with over-current protection shall be used when the number of outlets provided is inadequate. Power strips shall be lugged directly into provided outlets, and shall not be plugged into one another in series.
- C) All extension cords and power strips shall be adequately protected from foot traffic ('Bridged') if paths of travel cannot be avoided.
- D) An electrical permit may be required. See your local Building Department for requirements.

5. *Decorative Materials:*

- A) All decorative materials (decorations, drapes, backdrops and props) shall be either inherently flame retardant and labeled as such, or shall be treated with a flame retardant that is registered with the California State Fire Marshal.

(Flamort fire retardant is available for purchase from the Stanford University Fire Marshal's office)

- B) If material is treated by the user, a container and receipt will serve as proof.
NOTE: A Flame test may be required.

6. *Miscellaneous:*

- A) 'NO SMOKING' signs shall be provided at entrance and throughout exhibit.
- B) Storage or use of flammable or combustible liquids, gasses and solids is prohibited.
- C) Open flame is prohibited.
- D) Good housekeeping shall be maintained throughout exhibit and exit pathways.
- E) The use of smoke or fog machines is prohibited.