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PETER J. OSTROSKY
STATE FIRE MARSHAL

MEMORANDUM

TO: Heads of Fire Departments

FROM: Peter J. Ostroskey
State Fire Marshal

DATE: May 2, 2016

RE: **Cooking Appliances under Tents, Canopies and other
Temporary Structures**

The Department of Fire Services has become aware of questions related to cooking under tents, canopies and temporary structures at fairs, carnivals and community events.

The Massachusetts Comprehensive Fire Safety Code (527 CMR 1.00) contains provisions related to commercial cooking equipment. Specifically Section 50.2.1.9 requires that such facilities comply with the provisions of code unless exempted by the Authority having Jurisdiction.

A number of fire departments have asked for guidance in those situations where the Head of the Fire Department has decided to exempt these types of facilities from certain provisions of the Code related to fire suppression and exhaust systems.

At a minimum the following the safety considerations should be addressed if a decision is made by the head of the fire department to exempt these facilities.

- Tent, canopy, or temporary structure is located at least ten feet from any other structure.
- Tents, canopies, or temporary structures must be free standing. Sides may not be fully enclosed during cooking.
- Cooking equipment should be listed for commercial use. Clearances shall be

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maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's installation instructions.

- Occupancy within the tent, canopy, or temporary structure is limited to those persons involved in the food preparation. Food should be served at the outer edge of the tent, canopy, or temporary structure.
- Suitable barriers shall be provided to maintain a distance of not less than five feet from cooking equipment to areas accessible by the public
- LP-gas containers shall be located at the exterior edge of the tent, canopy, or temporary structure and secured to prevent tipping, damage or tampering.
- LP-gas containers should not be secured to the tent, canopy, or temporary structure.
- The LP-gas container shut off shall be accessible to operators and first responders.
- In cases of tents or canopies, they shall be flame resistant, and documentation shall be provided. Roofs of temporary structures shall be flame resistant or non-combustible.
- Storage of combustible items in the tent, canopy, or temporary structure shall be limited.
- Portable fire extinguisher shall be provided at each cooking location. A minimum of one K Class extinguisher shall be provided for each cooking location with a deep fat fryer.

These safety considerations are provided as *guidance only*. Fire departments should also factor in any unique hazards associated with their particular event.

If you need further assistance please contact the Code Compliance and Enforcement Unit at (978) 567-3375.