



# FIRE DEPARTMENT SANTA CLARA COUNTY

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<b>STANDARD DETAILS &amp; SPECIFICATIONS</b>	Spec No	<u>SI-4</u>
	Rev. Date	<u>10/07/09</u>
	Eff. Date	<u>08/23/90</u>
	Approved By	_____
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<b>SUBJECT: Haunted Houses/Ghost Walks</b>		

## SCOPE

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

## DEFINITIONS

**Decorative Materials:** All materials used for decorative, acoustical or other effect (such as curtains, draperies, fabrics, streamers, and surface coverings) and all other materials utilized for decorative effect (such as batting, cloth, cotton, hay stalks, straw, vines, leaves, trees, moss and similar items), including foam plastics and other materials containing foam plastics. Decorative materials do not include floor coverings, ordinary window shades, and painted wall coverings 0.025 inches or less in thickness applied directly to surface.

**Haunted House:** A temporary or permanent building or structure, or portion thereof, which contains a system that transports passengers or provides a walkway through a course so arranged that the means of egress are not apparent due to theatrical distractions, not visible due to low illumination, are disguised or are not readily available to the method of transportation through the building or structure.

**Ghost Walks:** Similar to a Haunted House and may include both indoor and outdoor areas where egress to a public way is similarly not readily identifiable.

## REFERENCES

2007 California Building Code, 2007 California Fire Code, and California Code of Regulations, Title 19.

## PERMITS

1. A permit application shall be submitted a minimum of two (2) weeks prior to the event. An inspection will be required prior to operation.
2. Use of tents and/or canopies shall meet the requirements of Santa Clara County Fire Department Standard Detail & Specification T-1 and will require an additional permit application.

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3. Additional permits may be required from local Planning and/or Building Departments. Those agencies should be contacted directly.
4. Permit application packets should include the following.
  - A A dimensioned site plan shall show the proximity of the event building(s) to other structures or hazardous areas, and the path of travel from the event building or area to the public way.
  - B A 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
    3. The path of travel participants will take when viewing the display. Include the layout of any mazes, mirrors or other display items that may confuse the egress path
    4. Location of electrical panel(s) and light switches
    5. Normal use of any structure(s) (i.e.: auditorium, school, church, etc.)
  - C A fire evacuation plan shall include the following:
    1. The procedure for reporting a fire or other emergency
    2. A site plan showing location of evacuation assembly points
    3. Floor plan identifying the location of the following:
      - a. Exits
      - b. Primary evacuation routes
      - c. Secondary evacuation routes
      - d. Accessible egress routes
      - e. Areas of refuge
      - f. Manual fire alarm boxes
      - g. Portable fire extinguishers
      - h. Fire alarm panel, and annunciators
  - D A fire safety plan shall include the following:
    1. Emergency egress or escape routes
    2. Procedure for accounting for occupants and staff after evacuation has been completed
    3. Identification and assignment of personnel responsible for rescue or emergency medical aid
    4. The preferred and any alternative means of notifying occupants of a fire or emergency
    5. The preferred and any alternative means of reporting fires and other emergencies to 9-1-1
    6. Identification and assignment of personnel in charge that can be contacted for further information
    7. A description of the emergency alarm, voice/ alarm, alert tone or preprogrammed voice messages
    8. The emergency procedure plan shall include a description of all staff positions and their duties

9. All personnel shall carry flashlights and know the location of all exits, fire extinguishers, light switches, electrical panels, and emergency phones. All personnel shall be trained in fire safety and fire evacuation
10. 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 or otherwise notified of an emergency condition
11. A fire drill demonstrating the implementation of the fire evacuation plan may be required at the time of inspection

### OCCUPANT LOAD AND STAFFING REQUIREMENTS

- A Maximum occupant load (which shall include personnel) shall be determined during plan review. A sign stating maximum occupant capacity shall be posted in a visible location near the entrance, and personnel shall control the flow of patrons so as not to exceed this limit.
- B The event shall be adequately staffed to 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 Fire Department.

### 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 Exit doors serving an occupant load of 50 or more shall not be provided with a latch or lock unless it is panic hardware.
- 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 lights.
- F Additional pathway markings, including low level marking signs, may be required at time of field inspection.

### FIRE PROTECTION

- A An automatic fire sprinkler system shall be provided.

**Exception:** When the total floor area is less than 1,000 square feet and travel distance to an exit is less than 50 feet

- B Provide an approved automatic smoke detection and alarm system in accordance with the California Building Code as required for amusement buildings.

**Exception:** When the total floor area is less than 1,000 square feet and the travel distance to an exit is less than 50 feet, manually activated device(s) suitable for sounding an alarm shall be provided as approved by the Fire department. The alarm shall be distinctive in tone and audible throughout the haunted house area.

- C Provide a public address system in accordance with the California Building Code as required for amusement buildings.

**Exception:** When the total floor area is less than 1,000 square feet and the travel distance to an exit is less than 50 feet, manually activated device(s) suitable for sounding an alarm shall be provided as approved by the Fire Department. The alarm shall be distinctive in tone and audible throughout the haunted house area.

- 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 and clearly illuminated or marked with reflective tape
  4. Located within 50 feet travel distance from anywhere in the building
- E Decorative materials shall not obstruct fire sprinklers, fire extinguishers, or any other Fire Department equipment.

### ELECTRICAL

1. Extension cords shall be a heavy commercial type. UL listed, in good condition, and shall be appropriate for the intended use.
2. Only UL listed power strips with over-current protection shall be used when the number of outlets provided is inadequate. Power strips shall be plugged directly into the outlet, and shall not be plugged into one another in series.
3. All extension cords and power strips shall be adequately protected from foot traffic ("Bridged") if paths of travel cannot be avoided.
4. An electrical permit may be required. See your local Building Department for requirements.

### DECORATIVE MATERIALS

1. All decorative materials (see definition) shall be either inherently flame retardant or labeled as such, or shall be treated with a flame retardant that is registered with the California State Fire Marshal.
2. If the material is treated by the user, a container and receipt will serve as proof.
3. Note: A Flame test may be required.  
The flame test shall consist of putting a flame to a sample of the materials by match or lighter. The test shall be conducted outside the building, on a specimen

of the materials approximately 3 inches wide by 10 inches long and orientated by a 45-degree angle from horizontal. When testing, the flame shall be put to the bottom edge of the material for a period of up to 12 seconds. If the material fails to ignite, or it ignites and the flame self-extinguishes when the flame source is removed from the sample, the material is considered to be flame retardant.

4. Care and consideration shall be used with respect to smoke generator and smoke alarm locations. Use of smoke generator may be restricted if determined to be incompatible with smoke alarm(s).

### MISCELLANEOUS

1. "NO SMOKING" signs shall be provided at main entrance and throughout exhibit.
2. Storage or use of flammable or combustible liquids, gasses and solids is prohibited.
3. Open flame is prohibited.
4. Good housekeeping shall be maintained throughout exhibit and exit pathways at all times.

**SAMPLE FORM:** (Form can be printed from Application Forms section)

**HAUNTED HOUSE / GHOST WALK  
EVENT APPLICATION FORM**

**1. EVENT INFORMATION**

Address of event: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of setup: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of teardown: \_\_\_\_\_

Date(s) open to public: \_\_\_\_\_ through \_\_\_\_\_

Hours of operation: \_\_\_\_\_

**2. CONTACT INFORMATION**

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Phone(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing address: \_\_\_\_\_

**3. OTHER:**

A. Description of special effects, including sound, theatrical smoke, lighting (i.e., strobes) and all other effects:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

B. Description of decorations and/or wall coverings being used. Provide documentation for the fire-retardant treated materials being proposed or provide a sample of the material for a flame test.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

C. Provide the following information in accordance with the Haunted House Standard:

1. Site plan for the event
2. Complete floor plan of event area
3. Fire Evacuation Plan
4. Fire Safety Plan
5. Fire protection and detection systems (if applicable)

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