



Fire Safety Considerations for School Administrators & Staff During the COVID-19 Pandemic

VERMONT
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Issued by the Vermont Department of Public Safety - Division of Fire Safety

This guidance was developed for school Administrators as they plan and implement the re-opening of schools for the 2020-21 School Year in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. Due to the current situation the Division of Fire Safety is providing the following guidance for required fire safety systems, alternative processes and safety reminders for use during the pandemic.

This situation continues to evolve very rapidly – so the information we are providing in this guidance may change as new information becomes available. For additional information, updates and resources, please visit our web page

www.firesafety.vermont.gov

Temporary Tents/Structures that are larger than 1200 square feet

- Must be permitted and approved through the Vermont Division of Fire Safety.
- Must follow the spacing and separation requirements of NFPA 1, Chapter 25. (Typically, 10'-20' based on presenting conditions)
- Must be designed, constructed and erected for its intended purpose.
- Any electrical installations must be completed by a Vermont Master Electrician and an Electrical Work Notice must be attained from the Division of Fire Safety.
- All electrical equipment must be listed for their intended use.
- No portable heating devices are allowed unless specifically approved by the Division of Fire Safety.
- **These tents/structures shall be included in the Schools Emergency Plan with detailed procedures for outside tents/spaces emergency evacuation plans and severe weather monitoring and relocation plans.**
- No open flame devices of any kind are permitted under or near any tent/structure.
- Combustible materials such as, dried vegetation (hay), wood chips and other natural materials are not permitted.

*****Severe weather monitoring and emergency relocation plans for all outdoor tents and temporary structures shall be included in each Schools Emergency Plan*****

Temporary Tents/Structures that are smaller than 1200 square feet

- Though permitting is not required for these smaller tents, it is strongly recommended to follow the conditions set forth for the larger tents and the spacing and separation requirements of NFPA 1, Chapter 25. (Typically, 10'-20' based on presenting conditions)
- No portable heating devices are allowed unless specifically approved by the Division of Fire Safety.
- All electrical equipment must be listed for their intended use.
- **These tents/structures shall be included in the Schools Emergency Plan with detailed procedures for outside tents/spaces emergency evacuation plans and severe weather monitoring and relocation plans.**
- No open flame devices of any kind are permitted.
- Combustible materials such as, dried vegetation (hay), wood chips and other natural materials are not permitted.

Portable Restrooms/Toilets

- Any electrical installations must be completed by a Vermont Master Electrician and an Electrical Work Notice must be attained from the Division of Fire Safety.
- If the portable restroom/toilet is connected to the main buildings potable water **and** wastewater system, then a Plumbing Work Notice must be submitted, and the work must be completed by a Vermont Licensed Plumber.
- Portable restrooms/toilets must meet the minimum requirements of the 2010 ADAAG. (ADA)

Fire Safety Considerations for School Administrators & Maintenance Personnel During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Alternative Classroom Sites (Other Buildings)

- There are specific requirements for the use of a building as an educational occupancy. Due to the current situation our office is issuing the following special provisions and required fire safety measures for a building to be used as an alternative classroom.
- Administrators and Facility Managers should consult with the Division of Fire Safety Fire Marshals to determine if the proposed alternative building is appropriate and safe for student/staff use.

Basic building, structure or space requirements:

- There should be a fire separation between the educational use and any other use in the building.
- There needs to be two remote means of egress from the building.
- Each room used as a classroom must have an egress window or a door leading directly to the outside, unless the building has an automatic sprinkler system installed.
- The building should have an automatic fire alarm system with occupant notification.
- Corridor walls should be able to resist the passage of smoke.
- Corridor doors shall be self-closing and self-latching unless the building has a sprinkler system.
- Classrooms for preschool, kindergarten, and first-grade students must be located on the level of exit discharge.
- Classrooms for second-grade students can be located no more than one floor above the level of exit discharge.

Alcohol-Based Hand Sanitizer

- No storage or handling of flammable liquids or gases shall be permitted in any location where such storage would jeopardize egress from the structure.
- Dispensers shall be installed in rooms or spaces separated from corridors and exits.
- The maximum individual dispenser fluid capacity shall be as follows:
 - 0.32 gal (1.2 L) for dispensers in rooms
 - 0.53 gal (2.0 L) for dispensers in suites of room
- The dispensers shall be separated from each other by horizontal spacing of not less than 48 in. (1220 mm).
- Containers of alcohol-based hand sanitizer shall be labeled and be a non-misting pump style dispenser.
- Storage of quantities greater than 5 gal (18.9 L) in a single fire compartment shall meet the applicable code requirements.
- The dispensers shall not be installed over or directly adjacent to an ignition source, which includes an electrical outlet
- Dispensers installed directly over carpeted and/or combustible floors shall be installed and arranged to prevent the hand sanitizer from coming in contact with the floor.

Disinfecting Wipes

- Disinfecting Wipes shall not be allowed in corridors of educational buildings.
- Disinfecting Wipes containers with up to 450 wipes can be in classrooms.
- The cumulative amount of Disinfecting Wipes in any classroom cannot exceed 450 wipes.
- Disinfecting Wipes shall not be allowed above or near any source of ignition.
- Bulk storage of Disinfecting Wipes that are not being used in quantities greater than five Containers (450 wipes each) shall be stored in a rated room or a flammable liquid storage cabinet.
- Disinfecting Wipes that have been used shall be discarded in a metal trash receptacle.
- Trash containing disposed Disinfecting Wipes shall be removed from the school on a daily basis, no trash shall be stored within the building.