



**FIRE SAFETY PRECAUTIONS AT
STREET FAIRS AND SIMILAR
OUTDOOR PUBLIC GATHERINGS**

OVERVIEW

- Annually, hundreds of street fairs and outdoor events are held in NYC, providing a myriad of enjoyable experiences ranging from food vendors to arts and crafts to live music.
- To ensure that such events are enjoyable and safe, the **New York City Fire Department (FDNY)** plays a crucial role in ensuring fire safety at street fairs and other public gatherings in NYC, by conducting inspections and enforcing specific regulations to minimize fire hazards and ensure public safety.
- This guide provides **basic information** to **prepare you for our inspections** as well as to **invite you to partner with us** in ensuring that the experience is **enjoyable, memorable** and **safe** for the public and first responders.





Safety First

This presentation will cover the regulations that govern street fairs and outdoor events set forth in the following Fire Rules and Fire Codes*.

Fire Rules

- R403-01: Fire Safety Precautions at Street Fairs and Similar Outdoor Public Gatherings
- R5705-01: Storage and Use of Fuel Oil on Mobile Trailers for Heating and Power Generation
- R6109-01: Liquefied Petroleum Gases

Fire Code

- Chapter 3 General Precautions Against Fire
- Section FC 906 Portable Fire Extinguishers
- Chapter 61 Liquefied Petroleum Gases

***FDNY Help/Reference portal:**

<https://www.nyc.gov/site/fdny/business/support/fire-code-and-rules-help.page>

Presentation Topics

To go directly to a topic, click it below.

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- [General Precautions](#)
- [Mobile Food Units](#)
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- [How to Request an Inspection](#)

GUIDELINES



Supervision



Cooking



Power



FDNY
Access

GUIDELINES



Supervision



Cooking



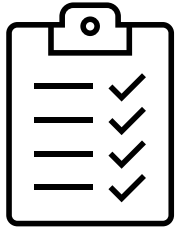
Power



**FDNY
Access**

Supervision

Fire Rules R403-01(b)(4)(A) & (B)



- It is the **responsibility of the sponsor and any event promoter** to ensure that all equipment, systems, materials and operations mandated by the Fire Code or Fire Rules are continually supervised by an individual holding the appropriate Certificate of Fitness, when applicable*, during the event.
- They will ensure a record (e.g., logbook) is maintained and available for inspection by any Department representative (e.g., Fire Protection Inspector).

*FDNY Certificate of Fitness may be required for certain operations at a street fair or outdoor event, such as for the propane and flammable or combustible liquids utilized.

GUIDELINES



Supervision

Cooking

Power

FDNY Access

Cooking



- There are three basic types of cooking associated with street fairs and outdoor events:
 1. Concessionaires (e.g., booths, tent).
 2. Mobile - not a motor vehicle (e.g., pushcarts).
 3. Mobile – motor vehicle (e.g., food trucks).
- The most common fuels utilized are propane and solid fuel (e.g., charcoal).
- With flames, lit charcoal and grease present during cooking operations, fire protection is to be provided, such as portable fire extinguishers.
- Due to the above conditions, supervision of cooking operations is very important and required as well.

Cooking Operations - Concessionaires



- Fire safety for cooking operations at street fair concessionaires is a critical concern, especially in a densely populated urban environment like New York City.
- The combination of **open flames**, **high heat**, **combustible materials**, **limited space**, and **large crowds** creates a significant **fire risk**.
- As such, it is very important for concessionaires to adhere to the guidelines to ensure public and vendor safety.

Concessionaires

Fire Rules R6109-01(j)(9)



Cooking Operations

- Propane
- Solid Fuels (e.g., wood, charcoal)

General Precautions

- Portable Fire Extinguishers
- Housekeeping

Propane (LPG) Cooking

Fire Rules R6109-01(j)(9)



Photo: [Flaming BBQ Grill at a Local Street Fair Editorial Photo - Image of flaming, cookouts: 72365386](#)

- Propane (Liquefied Petroleum Gas, or LPG) is a common and efficient fuel for cooking at street fairs due to its portability and clean burn.
- However, it's also highly flammable and presents significant fire and explosion risks if not handled correctly.
- The following slides will cover the basic requirements, to include supervision, maximum individual container sizes, quantity per cooking appliance, and proximity to combustibles.

Supervision of LPG

Fire Code Section FC6101.5/Fire Rules R403 – 01(b)(4)



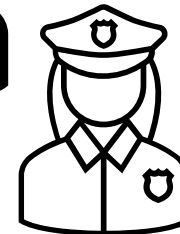
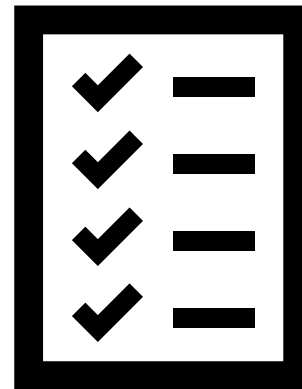
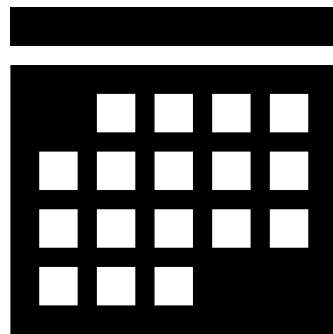
- An FDNY Certificate of Fitness (COF) is required for the connecting and disconnecting of propane tanks with a capacity exceeding 16.4 ounces, as well as the storage, handling and use specifically at street fairs and similar outdoor gatherings (See Fire Code Section FC6101.5).
- The most common container size of propane cylinders utilized at street fairs are 20 pound cylinders, which would require a person with the required Certificate of Fitness to **personally connect and disconnect the cylinders***. If **reserve storage of propane** at the event is approved, COF supervision is required as well**.
- Acceptable Certificates of Fitness would be:
 - ***Type G – 23:** “Use of Liquefied Petroleum Gas or Compressed Natural Gas at Outdoor Events & Mobile Cooking”
 - ****Type G – 44:** “Storage and Handling of LPG or CNG”
- To obtain a Certificate of Fitness, please visit: [certificates-of-fitness](#)

Supervision of LPG

Fire Code Section FC6101.5/Fire Rules R403 – 01(b)(4)



- If you're using propane (LPG) at an event, the certified person overseeing it has an important job.
- Every day before you start using any propane, **they must inspect all equipment** and where it's stored to confirm it's **safe** and **working correctly**, and that all fire safety measures are in place.
- They also need to keep a **log** of these **daily checks**, which must be ready to **show to any FDNY representative** who asks.





LPG Cooking

Fire Rules R6109-01(j)(9)



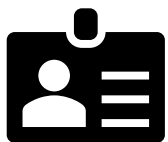
Max 2 x 20 lbs.
per appliance



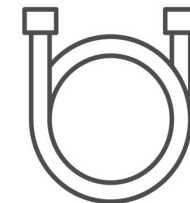
1 person max
supervising each
lpg appliance



FDNY COF required if
connecting/disconnecting
propane lpg tanks.



LPG Hose
Max 6 feet
Minimum 250 psi
UL Listed



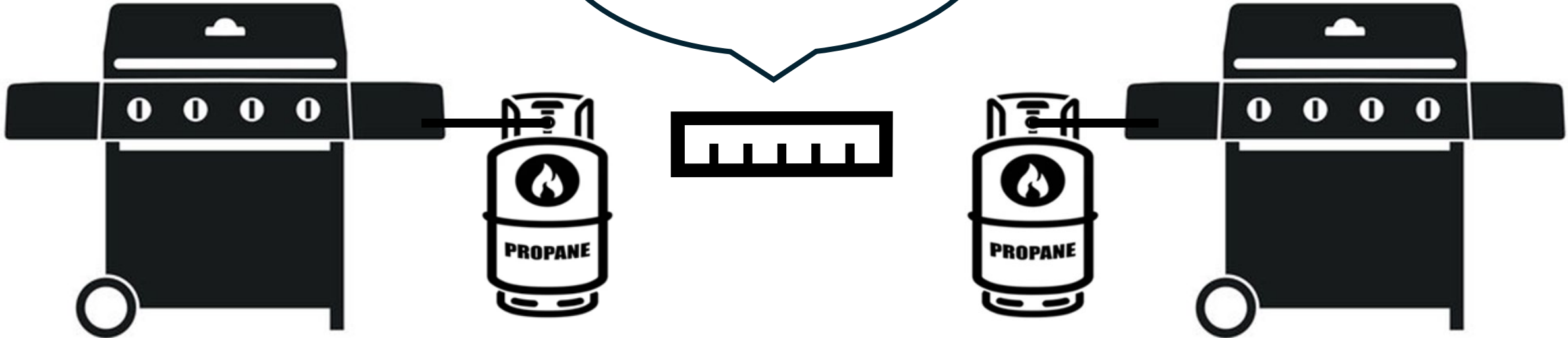


LPG Cooking - Distances

Fire Rules R6109-01(j)(9)



5 feet minimum distance
between lpg containers
connected for use.





LPG Cooking - Housekeeping

Fire Rules R6109-01(j)(9) & R403-01(d)(3)



Area surrounding the LPG equipment must be always kept clean.



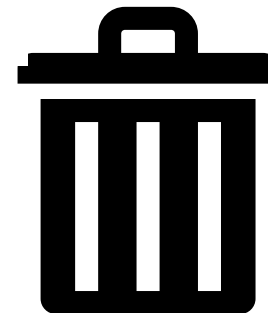
LPG containers must be at least **2** feet from any combustible material.



No combustible materials may be stored next to the LPG containers and related equipment.



All garbage and waste materials must be stored in a covered container. The waste container must not be allowed to overflow and should be emptied regularly.



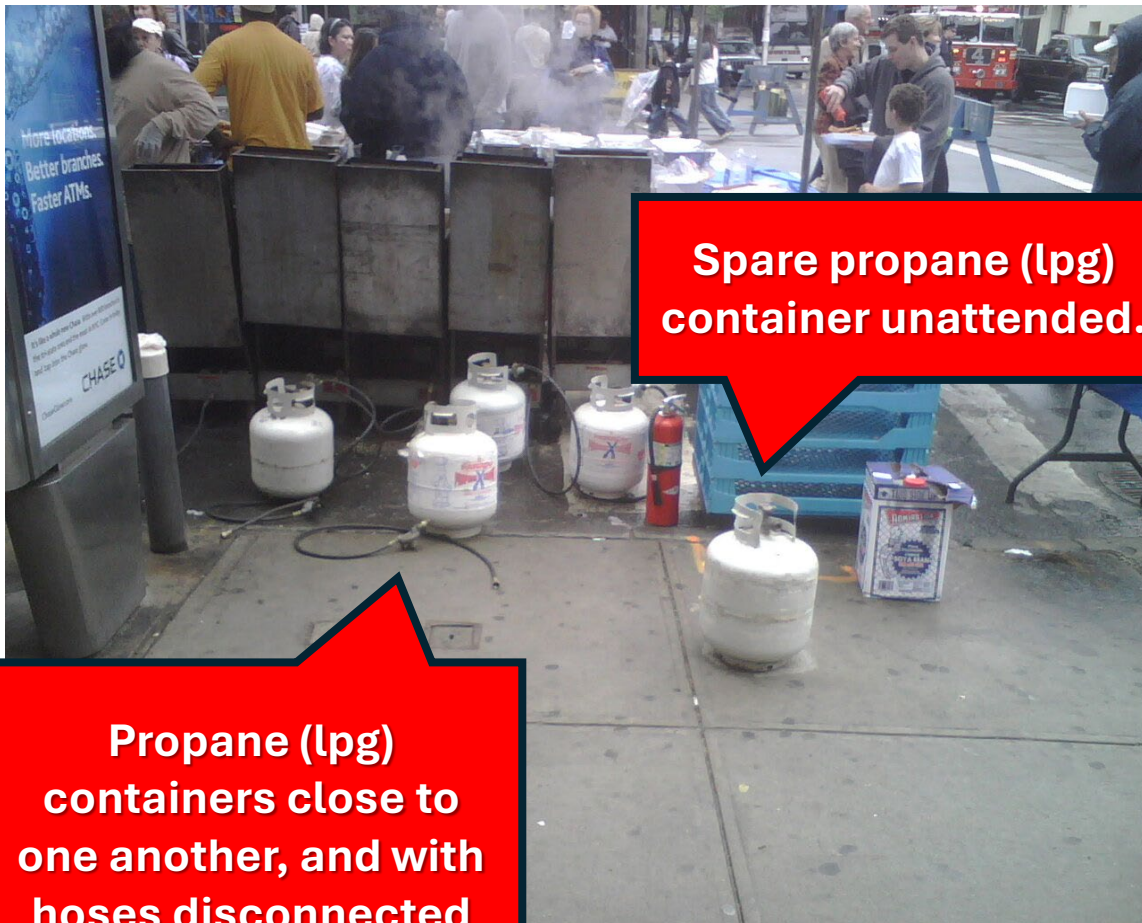


LPG Cooking

Fire Rules R6109-01(j)(9)



“DON’T”



Spare propane (lpg) container unattended.

Propane (lpg) containers close to one another, and with hoses disconnected laying on the ground.



Propane (lpg) containers greater than 20 pounds.



LPG Cooking



“DON’T”



Proximity to combustible material (tablecloth).

No spare cylinder(s) allowed.



LPG Cooking



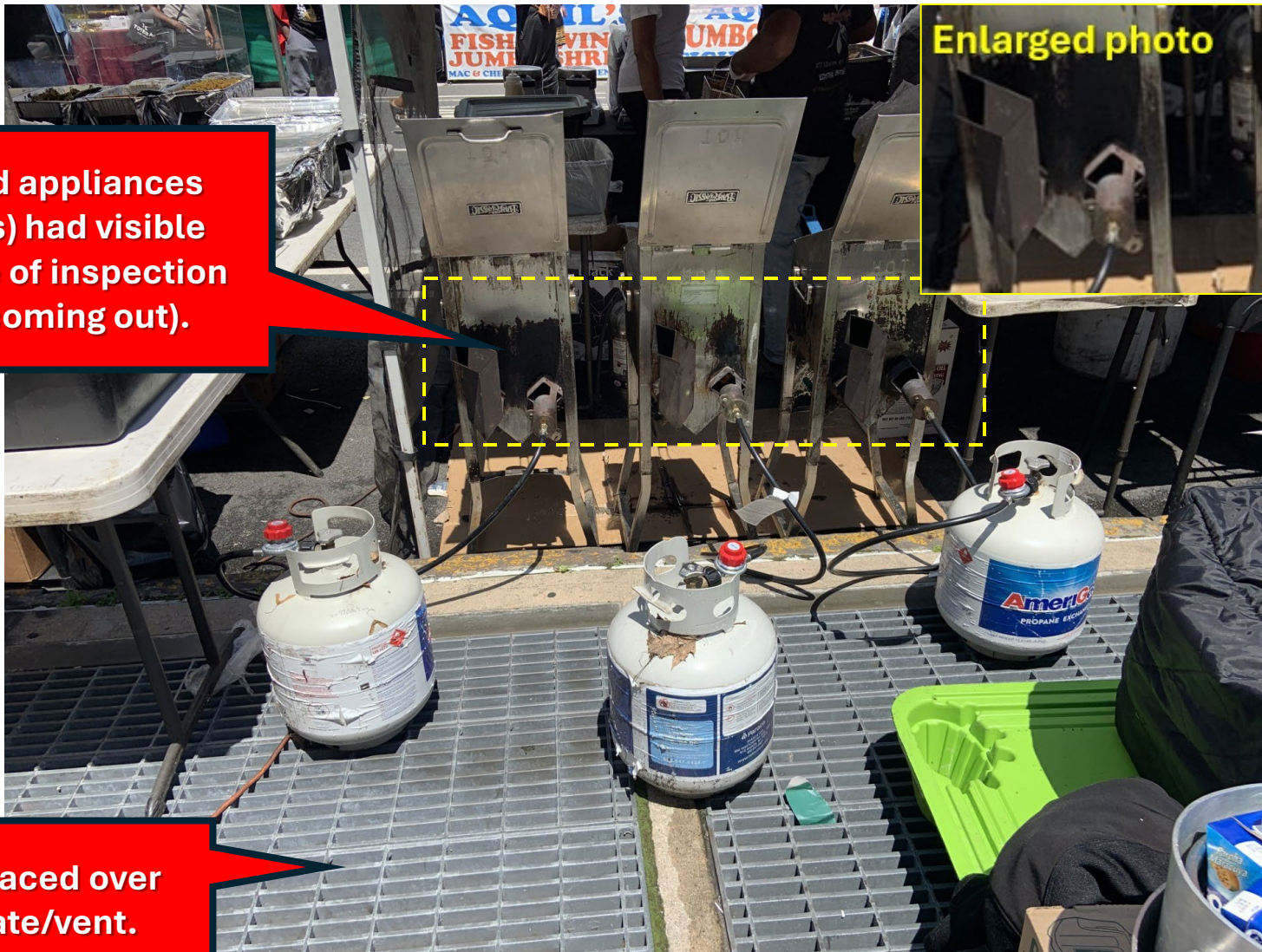
“DON’T”

Propane fueled appliances (deep fat fryers) had visible damage (at time of inspection flames were coming out).

Enlarged photo



Cylinders placed over subway grate/vent.





Solid Fuel Cooking



- Cooking with solid fuels, **such as wood or charcoal**, at street fairs introduces a heightened level of fire risk compared to electric or even propane cooking.
- The inherent nature of these fuels, with their **embers**, **ash**, and potential for **creosote buildup**, requires constant supervision, housekeeping and readily available fire protection.
- The following slides will provide the basic requirements for such cooking operations.



Solid Fuel Cooking

Fire Code Section FC307.5



The total grate area of a portable outdoor barbecue shall not exceed **10 square feet.**

Solid fuel shall be ignited with a match or other approved means. Matches shall not be stored in the immediate vicinity of cooking equipment.

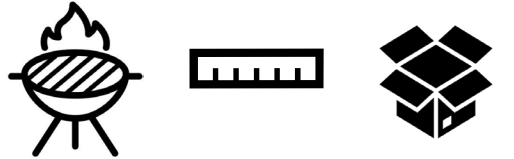
Combustible or flammable liquids shall not be used.



One (1) 4-A rated portable fire extinguisher required at each grill.



10 feet between grill and combustibles



Barbecues must be periodically cleaned by removing grease or fat accumulations from grills and trays below the grill.



Solid Fuel Cooking



Some traditional cooking methods, while often using wood fuel, must switch to charcoal when operating under our safety guidelines.

A prime example is Carne a la Llanera, the iconic roasted beef dish from Colombia and Venezuela, shown in this photo.

Because of the significant fire hazard posed by uncontrolled embers and flames from wood fires, the Fire Department will not authorize wood as a fuel for this type of cooking method.



Solid Fuel Cooking

Wood Fired Pizza Oven



- While popular for their delicious results, wood – fired pizza ovens pose specific fire safety hazards, especially when used at outdoor events in a densely populated city like NYC.
- Such hazards are posed by radiant heat and hot surfaces, fuel storage (wood), and embers.
- As such, approval from the Fire Department is required by filing a FDNY Letter of No Objection (LNO) before the event.
- Visit the following link to file for an LNO: <https://nyc-business.nyc.gov/nycbusiness/description/engineering-application/about>



Solid Alcohol for Food Warming

Fire Rules Section R308 - 01



- Solid alcohol containers, commonly called Sternos, are small, portable cans of jellied fuel that produce an open flame.
- They're commonly used to keep food warm, like under buffet dishes at parties or street fairs.
- Think of them as a small, contained flame designed to provide heat, often for warming food in chafing dishes.
- Even though the solid alcohol containers are small and contained, they produce a real, open flame.
- This means they generate significant heat and can ignite combustible materials.



Solid Alcohol for Food Warming

Fire Rules Section R308 - 01

- With solid alcohol containers producing an open flame, they are required to be kept a safe distance from combustible materials to minimize the risk of accidental ignition.
- For street fairs and outdoor events, common combustible materials would be the table coverings, napkins, paper/plastic cups, plastic tableware, and other decorations.
- It's strongly recommended to place the solid alcohol containers on non – combustible trays that should extend at least 8 inches beyond the container in each direction to prevent accidental contact with these types of combustible materials.





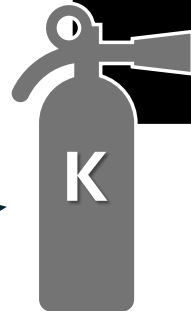
General Precautions

Fire Rules R403-01(d)

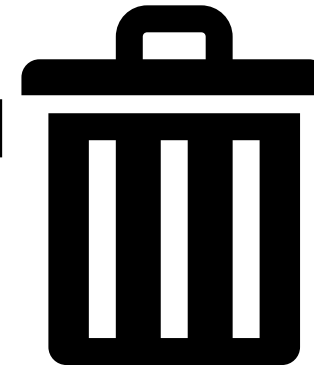
Portable Fire Extinguisher with a minimum 10 – B:C rating required where a hazardous material is being stored, handled or used, or hazardous operation is being conducted.



Class K Portable Fire Extinguisher required for grease laden cooking (e.g., deep fat fryers).



Each concessionaire's area, booth, tent or other facility or location shall be equipped with at least one (1) covered container for storage of combustible waste.



The waste container must not be overflow and should be emptied regularly. All garbage and waste materials must be stored in a covered container.

Mobile Food Units

Fire Rules R6109-01(j)(6)

- The NYC Fire Rules sets forth requirements for “mobile food units” that fall under the definition provided in Section § 89.01(g) of the New York City Health Code.

Definition:

- Mobile Food Unit Mobile food vending unit shall mean a food service establishment as defined in Article 81 of this Code located in a pushcart or vehicle, self or otherwise propelled, used to store, prepare, display, serve or sell food, or distribute food free of charge to the public, for consumption in a place other than in or on the unit.
- Any such pushcart or vehicle shall be deemed a mobile food vending unit whether operated indoors or outdoors, on public, private or restricted space.
- A mobile food vending unit shall not mean a stand or a booth.
- Such requirements provides a distinction between mobile cooking that is not defined as “motor vehicles” (e.g., pushcarts), and mobile cooking that is defined as motor vehicles (e.g., food trucks).
- The following slides will cover the requirements for both types.

Mobile Food Units



MOTOR VEHICLE
(e.g., Food Truck)



NOT A MOTOR VEHICLE
(e.g., Food Cart)

Mobile Food Unit - Motor Vehicle



LPG container valves shall be closed when the mobile food unit or its cooking equipment is not in use.



Maximum of 2 x propane cylinders. 100 lbs. or less each.



*Hazardous Cargo Unit sticker required when lpg is 47 pounds or more (see next slide for details).

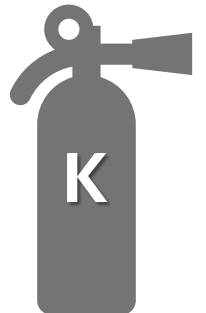
No flammable liquid or combustible liquid shall be used for cooking or any other purpose on any mobile food unit.



Portable Fire Extinguisher with a minimum 20 – B:C rating.



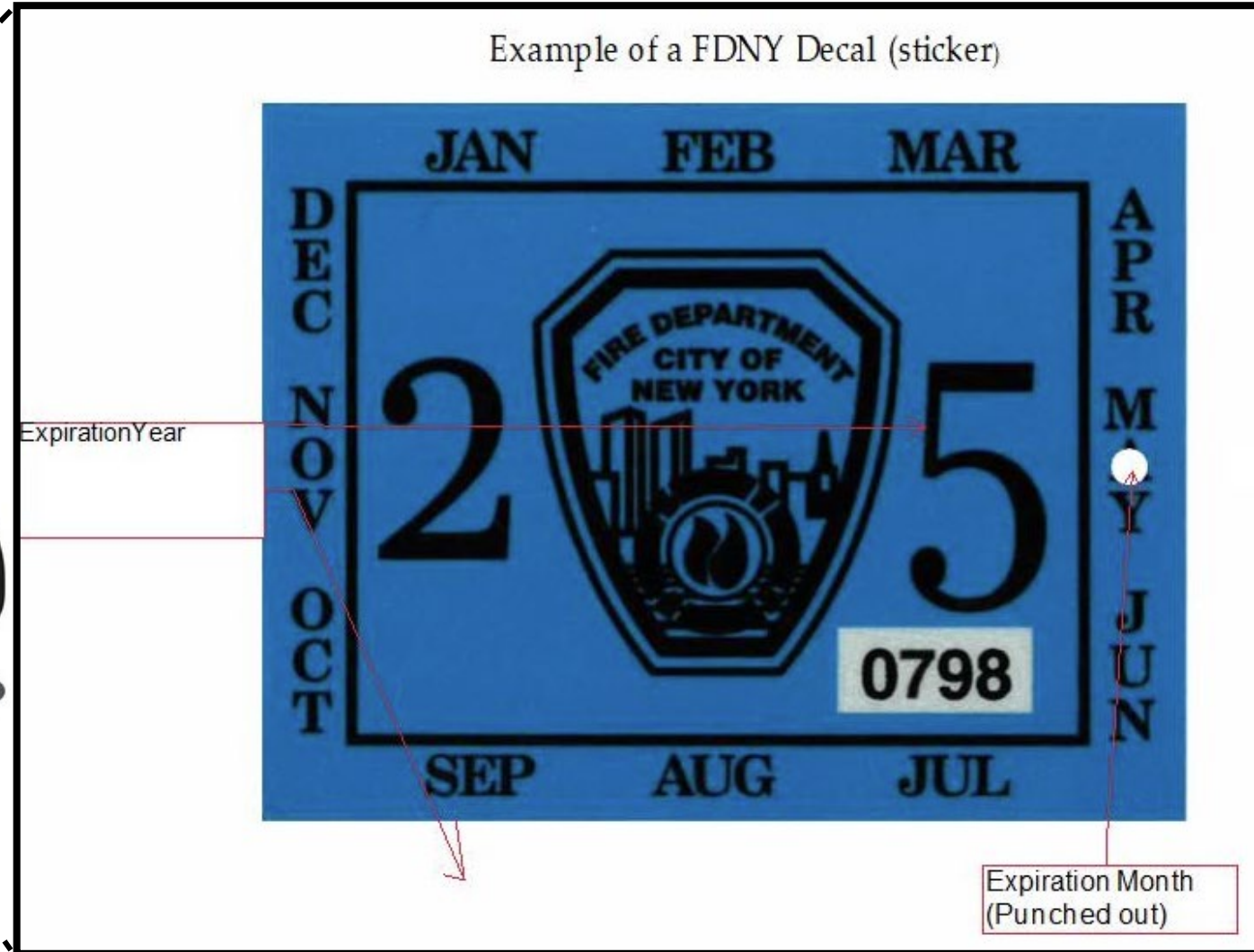
Class K Portable Fire Extinguisher required for grease laden cooking.



*To request an inspection of your food truck, please email: FDNY.BusinessSupport@fdny.nyc.gov.

Mobile Food Unit - Motor Vehicle

FDNY Inspection Decal*




*To request an inspection of your mobile food unit that is a motor vehicle (e.g., food truck), please email: FDNY.BusinessSupport@fdny.nyc.gov.

Mobile Food Unit - Motor Vehicle



“DON’T”



More than the maximum allowed quantity of two (2) lpg containers.



Missing safety plug for lpg container.



Bracket was loose.



Combustible shelf.

Food Cart

Fire Rules R6109-01(j)(6)

LPG container valves shall be closed when the mobile food unit or its cooking equipment is not in use.



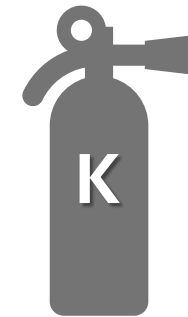
Maximum of 2 x propane cylinders.
Max 20 lbs. each.



Portable Fire Extinguisher with a minimum 2 – B:C rating.



Class K Portable Fire Extinguisher required for grease laden cooking.



✓ **“DO”**



No flammable liquid or combustible liquid shall be used for cooking or any other purpose on any mobile food unit.

LPG Mobile Cooking – Distances

Fire Rules R6109-01(j)(6)



2 feet minimum distance from:

- any combustible material (e.g., boxes, rubbish, vegetation)
- any building* (*see 5 feet, 10 feet, and 20 feet distancing for exceptions)



5 feet minimum distance from:

- any below-grade building opening, including any door, openable window or intake or exhaust vent*;
- any flammable gas storage, including another mobile food unit equipped with LPG containers
- any subway vent or other opening, except a subway entrance or exit (see 10 ft)

*Exception to the 2-foot distance requirement for a building.

LPG Mobile Cooking – Distances

Fire Rules R6109-01(j)(6)



10 feet minimum distance from:

- any building of wood frame construction*
- any subway entrance or exit
- any vent or fill line of any flammable liquid storage tank
- any building occupied as*:
 - multiple dwelling
 - educational
 - health care
 - religious purposes
 - public assembly



20 feet minimum distance from:

- 20 feet of any building entrance

*Exception to the 2-foot distance requirement for a building.

OVERVIEW



Supervision

Cooking

Power

FDNY
Access

Power Generation

- Temporary power is absolutely essential at street fairs and outdoor events to provide power for lighting, sound systems, food beverage vendors, entertainment and rides.
- The two (2) most common types utilized for power at street fairs and outdoor events are:
 1. Portable generators
 2. Mobile trailers
- The following slides will cover the basic requirements for such use.

Power – Portable Generator

✓ **“DO”**

Filling of the fuel tank during the outdoor event **NOT ALLOWED.** Incidental storage of flammable liquids (e.g., gasoline) prohibited.



One (1) 10-B:C rated fire extinguisher.



Caps on the fuel tanks secured during the outdoor event.

Minimum **10** feet from combustible materials.



Power - Mobile Trailers*

Fire Rules R5705-01

*Applies to mobile trailers that use more than 10 gallons of fuel oil (e.g., diesel fuel) for generation of electrical power.



Site - Specific Permit required if used at a street fair, bazaar, carnival, concert, festival or similar public outdoor gathering.

Only cargo tanks for which a permit has been issued by the Hazardous Cargo Unit may be used to deliver fuel oil to power generating trailers.

If filled manually (e.g., portable containers), person holding a certificate of fitness Type: C - 92 is required.



The trailer and equipment shall be electrically grounded in an approved manner.



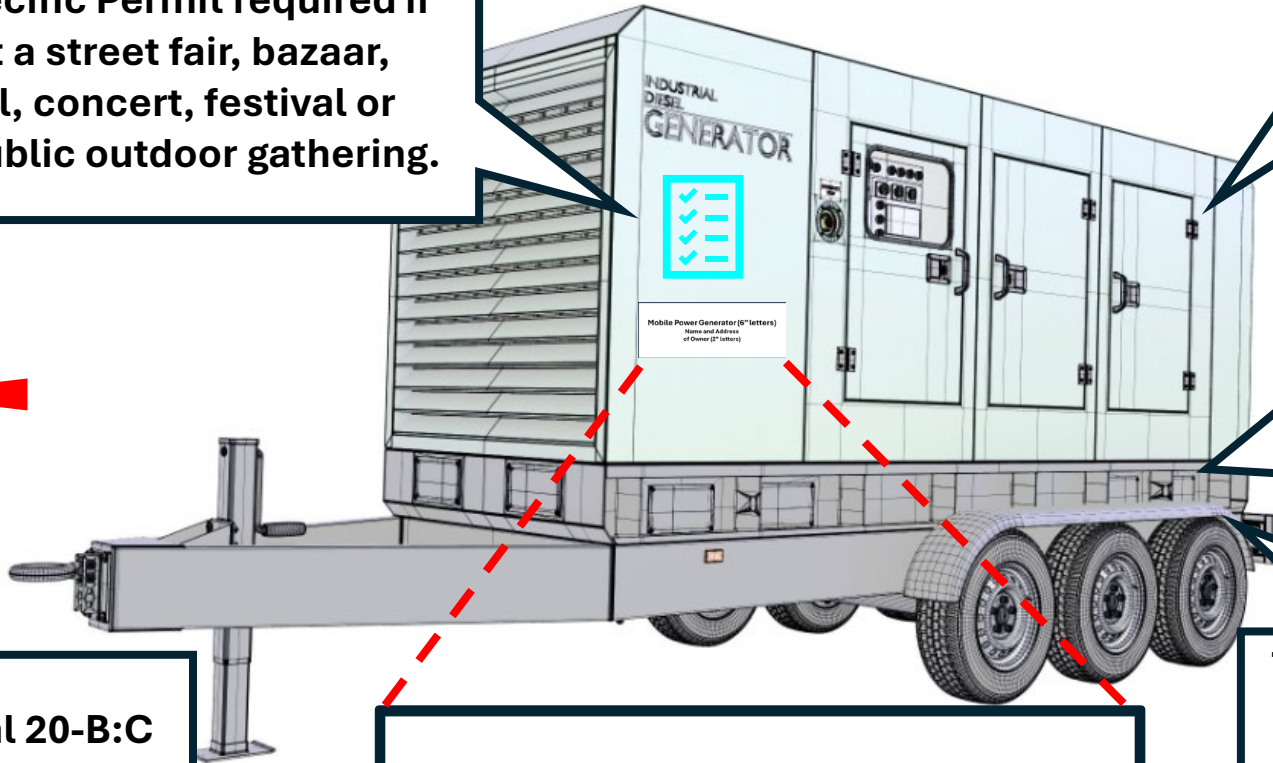
One (1) dry chemical 20-B:C
OR
One (1) CO2 2-B:C rated portable fire extinguisher to be provided.



Mobile Power Generator (6" letters)
Name and Address
of Owner (2" letters)



Mobile Power Generator (6" letters)
Name and Address
of Owner (2" letters)



Light Towers

- Portable light towers are common at outdoor events in NYC, providing essential illumination for safety, security, and aesthetics.
- However, they also present several fire safety hazards, such as fuel – related hazards, electrical hazards, and stability hazards, that require approval before and supervision during the event.
- As such, event sponsors and/or promoters must ensure that required fire safety and supervision measures are provided.



Energy Storage System or Powered Equipment

FC608 and FC309

- Energy Storage System (ESS) or powered equipment at street fairs has become common, replacing the historically utilized noisy and polluting gasoline or diesel fueled generators, as they are considered quieter and cleaner.
- Any requests for the intended use of battery system (ESS or powered equipment) over two (2) kWh, including battery light towers must be emailed to FDNY.BusinessSupport@fdny.nyc.gov and cc DistrictOfficeHeadquarters@fdny.nyc.gov.
- A **Letter of No Objection** may be required if the system is **above 2 kWh**.
- A **Fire Department permit** is required if the system is **over 20 kWh**.



OVERVIEW



Supervision

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FDNY
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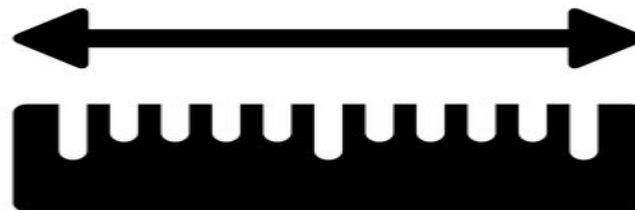
Fire Department Access

Fire Rules R403-01(d)

✓ **“DO”**



15 feet



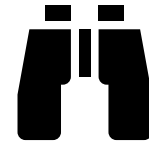
Unobstructed fire lane of not less than 15 feet* in width to be maintained.



12 inches in diameter



Fire hydrants and fire alarm boxes visible and unobstructed.



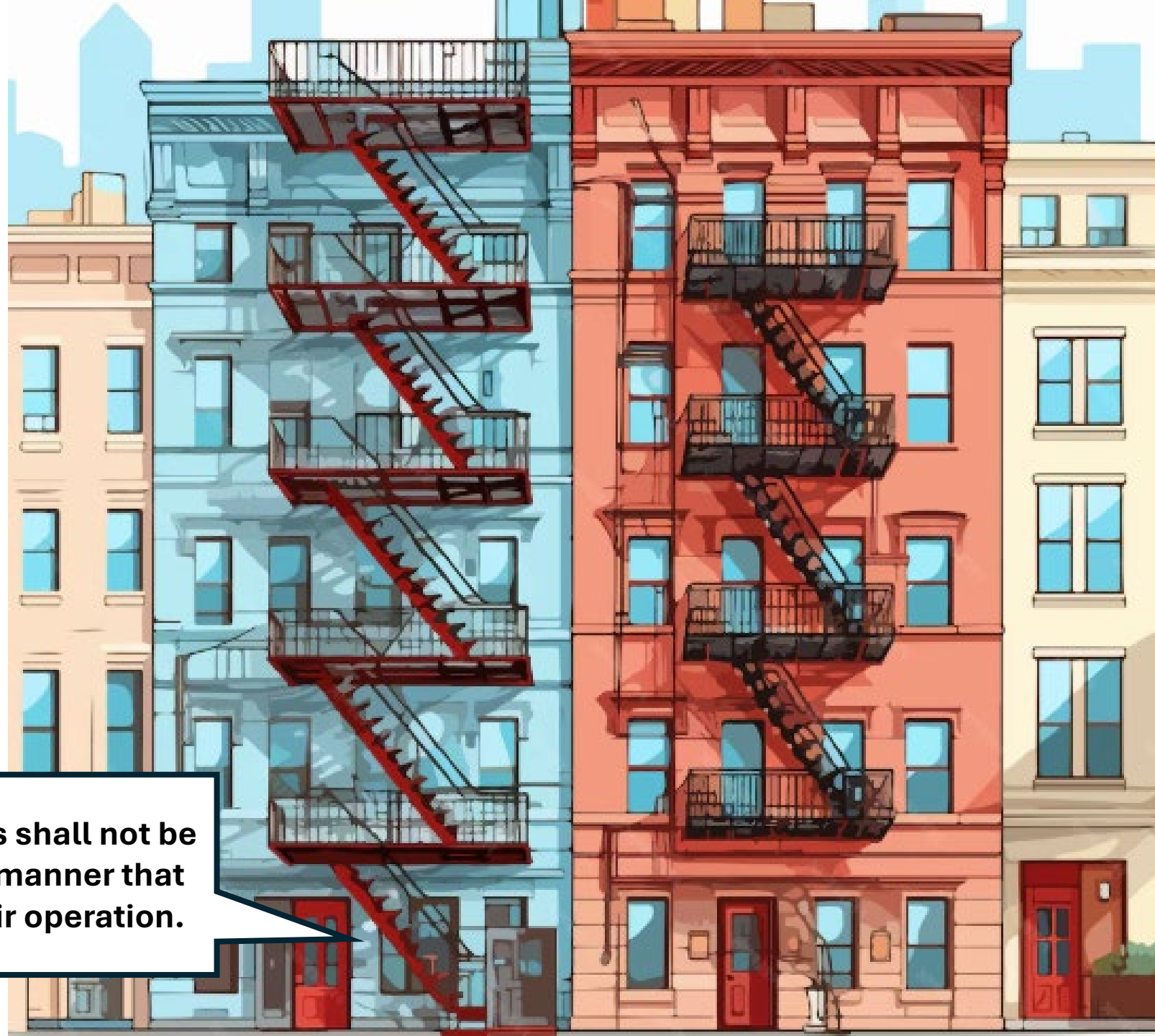
Locations of fire hydrants indicated by a solid yellow circle on the street, 12 inches in diameter.



Means of Egress

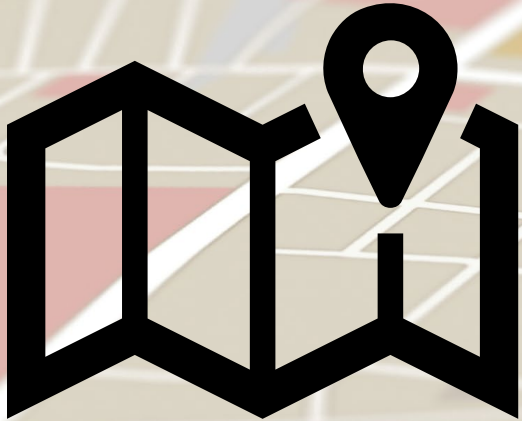
Fire Rules R403-01(d)

Fire escape ladders shall not be obstructed in any manner that would impede their operation.



Site Plan

Fire Rules R403-01(b)(3)



- Required to be submitted five (5) business days prior to the start date of any street fair or similar outdoor public gathering requiring a permit from the New York City Office of Citywide Events Coordination and Management.
- It is encouraged to submit the plans, if possible, 30 days prior to the event for review if any problem should arise such as if the information on the site plan is not sufficient. This would help to ensure that the event can take place without any unnecessary delays.
- Site plan can be filed with the Bureau of Fire Prevention at:
https://www.nyc.gov/assets/fdny/downloads/pdf/business/request-a-district-office-street-fair-inspection_v1.pdf.

Site Plan

Fire Rules R403-01(b)(3)



- Streets or other locations upon which the event will be held or surrounding the event.




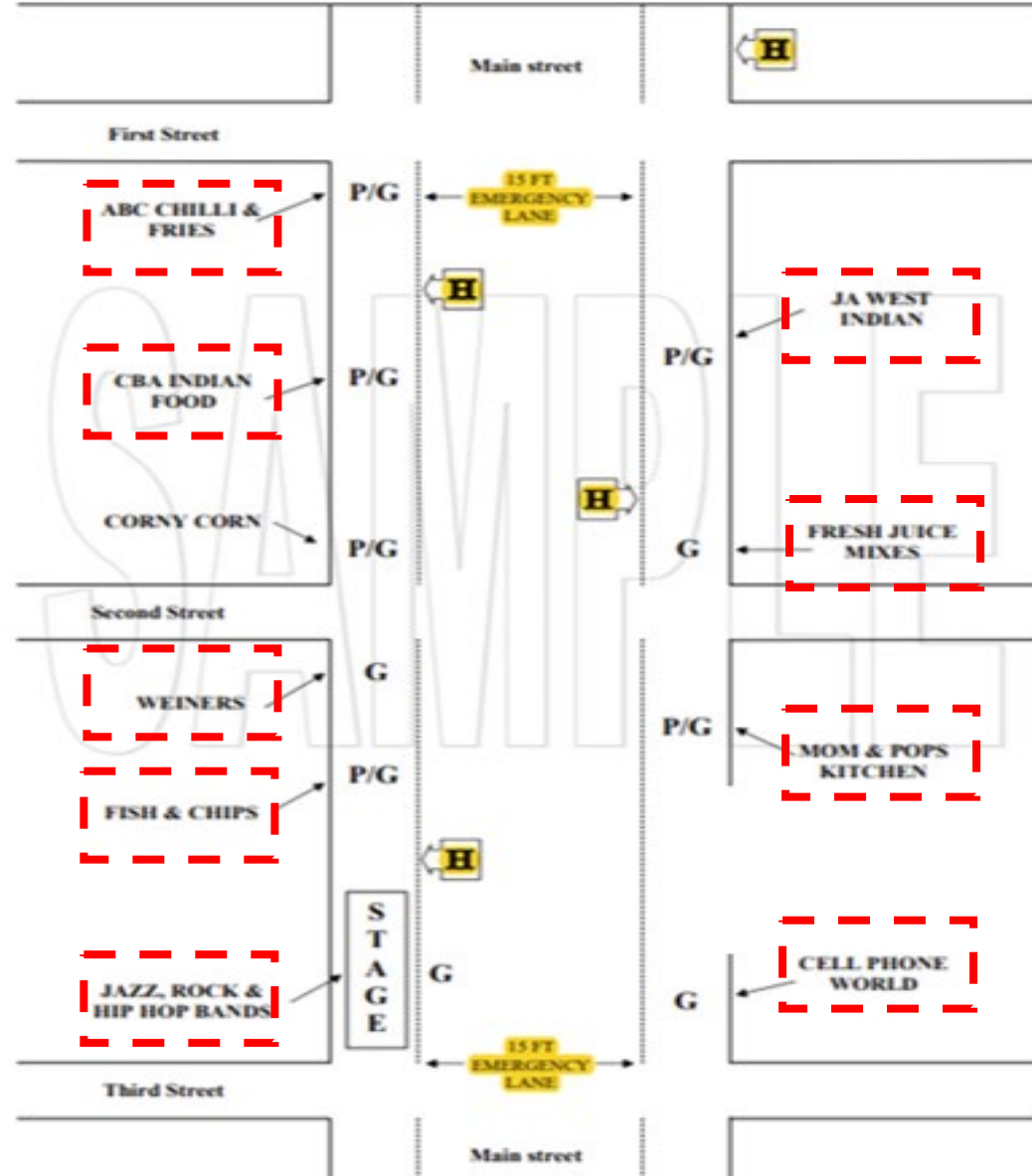
- Locations of concessionaires, with their identity and the nature of the activity they will conduct.

COMPANY / PROMOTER NAME
 ADDRESS
 CONTACT NAME
 CONTACT PHONE NUMBER
 CONTACT EMAIL ADDRESS

EVENT NAME
 EVENT LOCATIONS
 EVENT START DATE / TIME
 EVENT END DATE / TIME
 STREET ACTIVITY PERMIT (SAPO)#

P = Propane G = Generator  = Fire Hydrant --- = Vendor Area

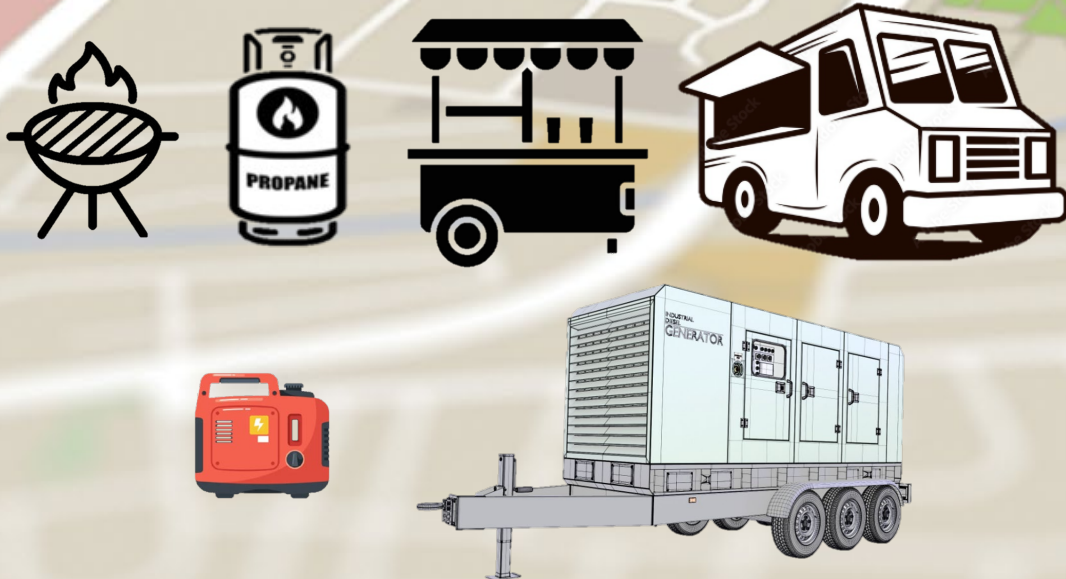
 = Min. 6ft. Wide Exit Corridor



Site Plan

Fire Rules R403-01(b)(3)

- Location of any portable fueled equipment, portable generators and other devices, equipment, systems, materials and operations regulated by the Fire Code or the rules, and the storage, handling and use of hazardous materials in connection with the event.

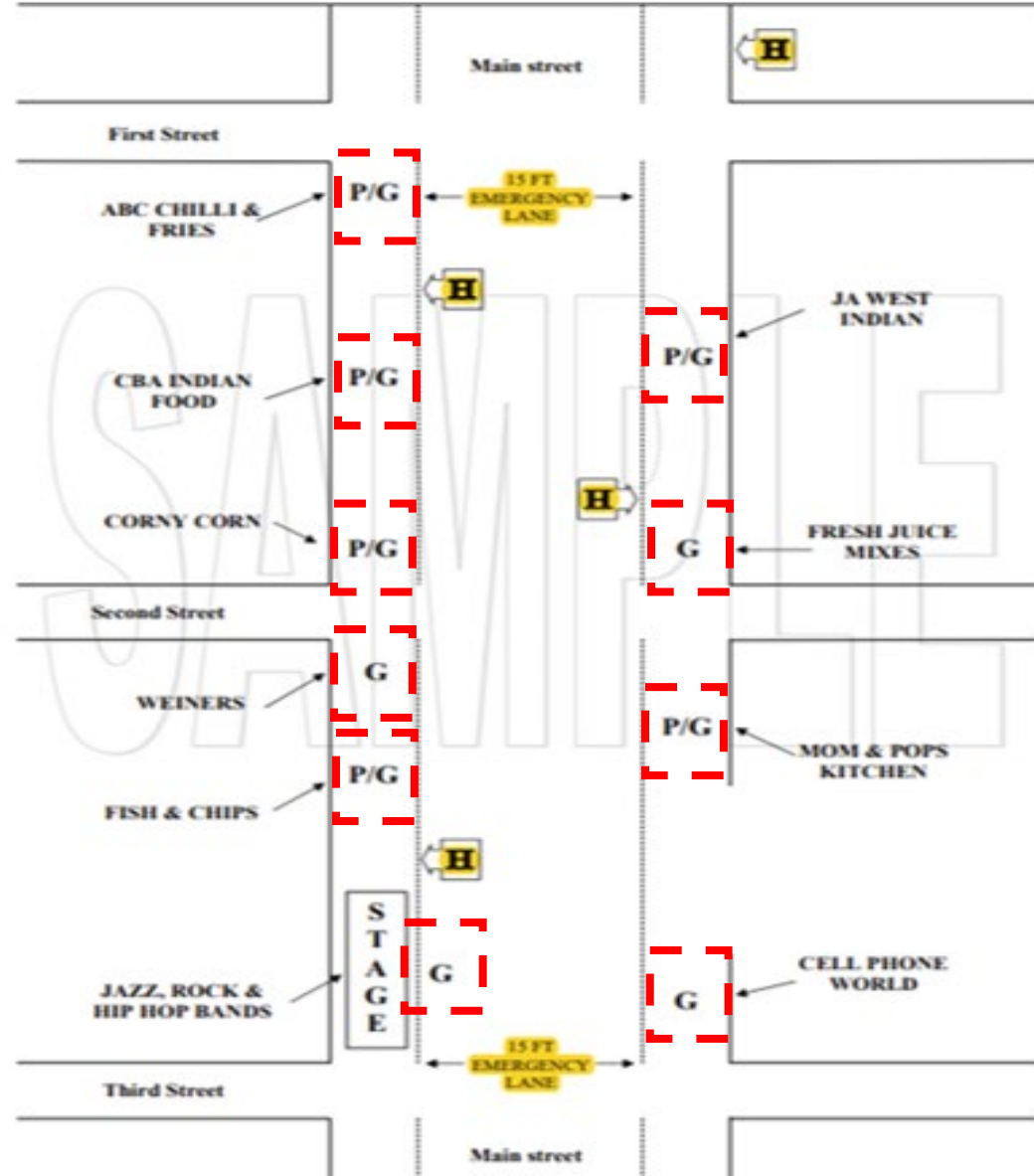


COMPANY / PROMOTER NAME
 ADDRESS
 CONTACT NAME
 CONTACT PHONE NUMBER
 CONTACT EMAIL ADDRESS

EVENT NAME
 EVENT LOCATIONS
 EVENT START DATE / TIME
 EVENT END DATE / TIME
 STREET ACTIVITY PERMIT (SAPO)#

P = Propane G = Generator H = Fire Hydrant --- = Vendor Area

Min. 6ft. Wide Exit Corridor



Site Plan

Fire Rules R403-01(b)(3)



- The Fire Department will review the site plan and notify the sponsor if there are unlawful or unsafe conditions that must be addressed prior to the event.
- Upon approval, a single combined permit for each type of material and operation associated with the event will be issued by the Fire Department.



How to request an inspection

- Contact BFP Customer Service Center at:
FDNY.BusinessSupport@fdny.nyc.gov.



Thank you!

The FDNY is deeply grateful for your understanding and cooperation during our inspections at all street fairs and outdoor events.

Your willingness to comply with safety regulations ensures a secure and enjoyable environment for everyone.

Thank you for being such a crucial partner in our efforts to prevent fires and ensure public safety.

