



# SAFETY GUIDELINES

National Peanut Festival Fairgrounds

**FESTIVAL OFFICE: 334-793-4323**

Fire Code, life safety, permits and variance  
information. June 2023

**National Peanut Festival Association, Inc.**

All Information Subject to Change

The purpose of this information is to provide guidance on fire and life safety requirements for event organizers utilizing The National Peanut Festival Association, Inc. facilities. This information contains guidance for common fire and life safety issues; it is by no means all inclusive, as every event presents different hazards. Alabama Fire Code (AFC), where applicable, is referenced in parenthesis. Throughout this document, the National Peanut Festival Association, Inc. is referenced as NPF. If there are any questions about fire or life safety issues, contact the Executive Director or the Facility Manager at 334-793-4323.

### **ALABAMA AND CITY OF DOTHAN FIRE CODE COMPLIANCE**

It is expected that all event organizers follow these fire and life safety requirements and adhere to the Alabama and City of Dothan Fire Code regulations. There may be an occasion where one or more aspects of an event violate these guidelines or fire code regulations. To ensure a safe event and that rules are not violated, the event organizer may need to apply for a special endorsement to the NPF permit or a variance. To determine if an endorsement or variance is required, you should contact the Executive Director at 334-793-4323. This should be done at least 4 months prior to the show dates.

#### **Special Endorsement Permit**

The National Peanut Festival Association, Inc. holds an Annual Business License and permit with the City of Dothan Fire Marshal's Office. For most events, this is sufficient for compliance with Alabama and City of Dothan Fire Code. Some events, however, may require a "Special Endorsement" to the NPF Business Licenses and Permits. To request a variance, the event organizer should contact the Dothan Fire Department, Fire Marshal, 334-615-3500.

#### **Variance**

If an aspect of an event violates the fire code, the event promoter should consult with NPF Executive Director first. then seek a variance from the City of Dothan Fire Department.

### **DEADLY WEAPONS**

The National Peanut Festival is a private non-profit association that is governed by the State of Alabama and the City of Dothan, both which allow private businesses or associations to prohibit possession of deadly weapons on site. The NPF expressly prohibits the possession of deadly weapons of any kind on the property unless such a weapon is intended for sale or trade at an event (i.e. Gun & Knife Show).

Any deadly weapon found in the possession of a person while on the NPF Fairgrounds is subject to immediate confiscation. Any person properly licensed to carry a firearm will be asked to secure the firearm in a locked compartment of his/her vehicle that is not visible to passersby. Anyone who refuses to return the weapon to their vehicle will be subject to removal from the property and may receive a trespass order preventing their return for up to one year.

Federal, state or local law enforcement officers are permitted to carry on the property as are those individuals authorized or employed by the National Peanut Festival to provide security protection and services.

## **RESPONSE TO ANY EMERGENCY**

Any and all emergencies **MUST** be reported to the Fairgrounds Security Team immediately by calling 334-797-2061. Our trained staff will respond appropriately to the situation. Fairgrounds Security, the Executive Director, or the Facility Manager may dispatch on-site medical, fire, or law enforcement resources or call 911. The Fairground Security Team consists of the Executive Director, the Facility Manager and the Security Committee Chairman. During NPF related events, one or all three will be available to be reached at the emergency contact number.

Due to the size and various events on the Fairgrounds, it is important for the Security team to speak with 911 to help them navigate the Fairgrounds and provide the best response possible.

With responders on-site during events, notifying Fairgrounds Security may provide a quicker response than notifying 911. If a guest or event staff notifies 911 of an emergency, it is important to immediately call Fairgrounds Security Team so Security may assist the emergency responders.

### **Incident Reports**

Fairgrounds Security Team **MUST** document any incident that involves an NPF staff, NPF guest, or event staff. This may include a vehicle accident, theft, medical emergency, minor medical incident, use of fire extinguisher or fire, property damage, etc. It is mandatory to notify Fairgrounds Security of any incident. To receive a copy of an incident report, a request must be submitted in writing. Requests can be made via email ([info@nationalpeanutfestival.com](mailto:info@nationalpeanutfestival.com)) or sent to the Executive Director, National Peanut Festival Association, Inc, 5622 U.S. Hwy 231 S, Dothan, Al. 36301. Please allow 7 business days for a report to be considered final.

## **EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURES**

In certain emergency situations first responders or NPF staff may order the evacuation of certain buildings or outdoor spaces or instruct people in those spaces to shelter-in-place. Evacuation or shelter-in-place may be necessary due to a nearby hazard not directly related to the event. When such actions are warranted, NPF staff and/or first responders will advise you, your staff, and your guests on the appropriate action to take.

Event staff should be ready to assist in directing all guests and persons unfamiliar with the buildings out of the facility or to the shelter area(s). Event staff should follow standard crowd management procedures and the instructions of NPF staff.

Event staff should make sure all exits and pathways are open and clear throughout the course of the event. All items such as tables, chairs, turnstiles, etc. should be moved out of the flow of traffic. In an emergency, all exit doors should be opened to expedite egress.

Personnel stationed near back of house areas should check and clear all office areas during an evacuation. All doors should be closed after a room has been checked.

### **Emergency Evacuation Review:**

1. Know the exits in your building/area (primary, secondary, and tertiary).
2. Respond quickly and calmly to instructions from NPF staff or first responders.
3. Guide guests to exits.
4. Ensure that your area is totally evacuated.
6. Give special attention to those with special needs.

### Occupancy

The event promoter/organizer shall assume responsibility for compliance with the occupancy rate for the premises as established by the City of Dothan Fire Marshal and as posted in the premises. The event layout does affect the maximum occupancy load.

### Blocked Exits/Aisle Width

No objects, displays, vendor booths, or equipment shall block exits or aisles. All exits and aisles should be kept clear and unobstructed.

- Obstructions shall not be placed in the required width of any means of egress per City of Dothan Fire Code.
- Egress doors shall be readily operable from the egress side without the use of a key or special knowledge or effort.
- The minimum aisle width per ADA requirements is 36 inches and this must be maintained throughout the event.
- Displays, vehicles, or objects outside of the building must not obstruct exit doors.

### Exit Signage

Exit signs shall be readily visible and illuminated at all times buildings are occupied. Do not hang drapes or other items over exits and exit signs.

## **FIRE PROTECTION**

### Fire Extinguishers

Fire extinguishers are provided by the NPF throughout buildings as required and are inspected regularly. If you use a fire extinguisher, notify the Fairgrounds Security Team right away so an incident report can be taken, and the fire extinguisher can be replaced.

- Fire extinguishers are not to be blocked or obstructed.
- Areas where cooking involves solid fuels or vegetable/animal oils and fats (i.e. fryers) shall be protected by a Class K rate portable fire extinguisher located within 30 feet of the cooking area.
- Fire extinguishers shall be installed, serviced, maintained, and tagged on an annual basis. The NPF maintains facility fire extinguishers; this same requirement applies to extinguishers owned by the event organizer or exhibitors.

### Propane and Compressed Gas

Compressed gas tanks must be stored outside of buildings and have valves painted away from doors and tents/canopies. All compressed gas tanks must be secured to prevent falling or being knocked over while in use or storage.

Propane tanks are not allowed inside buildings during public events. This includes those attached to forklifts, vehicles, or used for cooking devices.

### Smoking

Smoking is prohibited indoors and within 8 feet of an entrance. Vapor cigarettes and pipes (e-cigarettes) are prohibited in all buildings and within 8 feet of an entrance. Smoking is permitted in designated

smoking areas only and will be marked. Repeated violations could result in the offender being asked to vacate the premises.

## **ELECTRICAL HAZARDS**

### Electrical Panels

Electrical panels must not be blocked. There must be a minimum of 36 inches of clearance in front of electrical service equipment. Event organizer staff, vendors, guests, and other non-NPF personnel should not access the equipment inside electrical panels. Contact the Facility Manager to request assistance with electrical issues.

### Extension Cords/Surge Protectors

All event staff, exhibitors, and vendors must adhere to the following:

- Only grounded extension cords are allowed.
- Extension cords shall not run through doorways, under bedding/mulch, under floor coverings, or anyway damage may occur.
- Extension cords must be maintained in good condition without splices, deterioration, improper modification, or damage.
- Multi-plug adapters are not allowed.
- Surge protectors and power strips are not allowed to be plugged together.
- Surge protectors and power strips must be plugged directly into an outlet, not an extension cord.

## **VEHICLES**

Vehicles being used during a show (not on display) must follow the specific guidelines:

- Anyone operating a motor vehicle (including golf carts) on the Fairgrounds must have a valid driver's license.
- Anyone operating a vehicle on the Fairgrounds must comply with all traffic control devices, remain at or below the marked speed limits and give right of way to pedestrians at all times.
- No fueled equipment is to be utilized or stored indoors while the event is open to the public. Only electric-powered golf carts, forklifts, and scissor lifts are allowed to be driven inside during load-in/load-out times.
- No vehicles of any type can be driven on the paved areas of the Fairgrounds within 15 minutes of the event opening. Only emergency personnel and response units will be allowed in guest areas during events.

### Load-In/Load-Out

During load-in/load-out times when the facilities/buildings are not open to the public, vehicles may enter the building after permission is given by the NPF staff. Vehicles may not block exits or aisles and must be turned off while inside. Gas-or-electric powered golf carts, forklifts, and scissor lifts are allowed to be driven inside during load-in/load-out times.

### Golf Carts

While the event is open to the public, no fuel-powered golf carts are allowed to be driven or parked inside the buildings. Only electric carts are allowed inside during event hours. You must have a valid driver's license to operate a golf cart on the Fairgrounds.

### Forklifts and Scissor Lifts

While the event is open to the public, no-fuel or propane-powered forklifts or scissor lifts are allowed to be driven or parked inside the buildings. If the lift is parked inside the building during the event hours, the propane tank must be removed and secured outside the building. Only electric lifts are allowed inside the buildings during event hours. You must have a valid forklift or scissor lift certification to operate a forklift or scissor lift on the Fairgrounds.

### **TENTS AND CANOPIES**

The NPF defines a tent or canopy as a structure, enclosure, or shelter with or without sidewalls, constructed of fabric or pliable material supported by any manner except by air or the contents that it protects. The NPF reserves the right to inspect and deem unsafe any tent or canopy that does not fall under the inspection requirements of the City of Dothan Fire Marshal's Office. Generally, these structures are understood to be less than 400 square feet in size and do not contain an open or exposed flame.

Tents or canopies that are deemed unsafe by the NPF will be closed to the event, exhibitors, staff, and general public until any safety issues are resolved to the NPF's satisfaction. If safe installation is not possible, the NPF maintains the right to require the removal of unsafe tents or canopies.

NPF management should be notified in any of the following situations:

1. Any tent or canopy installation is planned/intended.
2. Tents or canopies that are not able to be erected according to the manufacturer's specifications and intended use.
3. When the wind load data is unavailable.
4. If cooking or open flame is planned within the tent structure.

According to the Alabama fire code, cooking under a tent is prohibited. Tents or canopies should not be located within 10 feet of lot lines, buildings, parked vehicles, or internal combustion engines. Deep fryers and cooking with grease laden vapors are also prohibited under tents.

Tents and membrane structures having an area in excess of 400 square feet shall not be erected, operated or maintained for any purpose without first obtaining a permit and approval from the Dothan Fire Department.

Any temporary structures less than 400 square feet will be inspected by the NPF staff using the following guidelines:

Installation:

- All tents or canopies must be installed and erected based on manufacturer's direction.
- 10 x 10 tents/canopies shall have no less than 40 pounds of ballast on each corner of the structure. Tents and their accessories should be adequately roped, braced, and anchored to

withstand the elements of weather and prevent against collapsing. NPF does not provide ballasts.

- 10 x 20 tents/canopies should have no less than 80 pounds of ballast on each corner of the structure. Tents and their accessories shall be adequately roped, braced, and anchored to withstand the elements of weather and prevent against collapsing. NPF does not provide ballasts.
- The required width of exits, aisles, and passageways shall be maintained at all times to a public way. Guy wires, guy ropes, and other support members shall not cross a means of egress at a height of less than 8 feet.

#### Exits:

- Exits shall be clearly marked. Exit signs shall be installed at required exit doorways and where otherwise necessary to indicate clearly the direction of egress when the exit serves an occupant load of 50 or more.

#### Cooking:

- Any tent/canopy with cooking activities shall have at least one fire extinguisher. Vendors using fryers must have a Class K extinguisher.
- Any cooking that releases grease-laden vapors shall have a "hood system" covering the entire cooking surface with proper ventilation to outside air.

#### Propane/Compressed Gas:

- Propane or any other compressed gas tank must be stored outside of the tent/canopy.
- Propane or any other compressed gas tank being stored outside of the tent or canopy must have safety valves pointed away from any tent or canopy.
- Propane or any other compressed gas tank must be secured from tipping or falling over.

#### Fire Extinguishers:

- Maximum travel distance to a portable fire extinguisher shall not exceed 75 feet and cannot be obstructed by a door, wall, or any other partition.
- Each tent/canopy with a cooking/warming device or storing flammable material must have its own fire extinguisher.

#### Smoking:

- No smoking allowed within a tent or canopy.
- "No Smoking" signs must be placed within the tent or canopy.

#### Evacuation:

- Any tent or canopy on the Fairgrounds is to be evacuated if the sustained wind speed exceeds 75% of the designed wind load of the structure, or sustained wind speeds of 25 mph, whichever occurs first.

## **EXHIBITOR/VENDOR DISPLAYS**

### **Display Vehicles**

Any vehicles on display (including cars, trucks, golf carts, ATV, boats, RVs, etc.) must adhere to the following requirements:

- Fuel tanks must have less than ¼ tank of gas or less than 5 gallons of fuel (whichever is least).
- Fuel tanks and fill openings are closed and sealed to prevent tampering.
- Battery must be disconnected.
- Fueling and de-fueling cannot take place inside any building.
- Vehicle keys must always remain in the venue.
- Vehicles cannot block exits or aisles.

### **Cooking Devices**

No open flame, propane-powered devices, or charcoal devices are allowed inside. The only cooking devices allowed are electric-powered warming devices such as crockpots and coffee makers. “Sterno” heaters (alcohol gel) smaller than 8 ounces are also allowed.

### **Open Flames**

Open flames of any kind (including candles) are prohibited in all NPF buildings. Any warming device or decorative flame must be electric-powered. NPF does have variances from the Dothan Fire Department to exempt some open flame activities. Use of open flames in any building must receive approval from the Executive Director prior to installation and use during an event.

### **Inflatables & Amusements Rides**

Inflatable structures are allowed with prior permission from NPF management. Non-amusement inflatables are those that are not weight-bearing such as advertising structures or games. Amusement inflatables are those utilized for weight-bearing such as a bounce-house or obstacle course.

Amusement inflatables must adhere to the following requirements:

- Structure must be properly anchored according to manufactured specifications.
- If the structure utilizes more than one blower, each blower must be plugged into a different power source or different circuit.
- Only electric-powered blowers are allowed.

Amusement rides are any mechanical device that carries or conveys passengers through a fixed or restricted course within a defined area. Any and all amusement rides must be approved by the Executive Director prior to use by the general public.

### **Pyrotechnics and Fireworks**

Before NPF approval is considered, all pyrotechnics require special approval by Dothan Fire Department in accordance with Alabama Fire Code and City of Dothan Fire Code. Application approval, inspections, demonstrations, and payments need to be coordinated directly with the City of Dothan Fire Marshal’s office. Due to the coordination of permitting and inspection, please notify the NPF management as early in the process as possible. Use of pyrotechnic and firework displays must adhere to the following requirements:



- All displays must be performed with a licensed pyrotechnic expert.
- No fireworks or pyrotechnic display can be used until the display has been inspected and approved by the City of Dothan Fire Marshal's office.

All pyrotechnics and flame effects must comply with Alabama Fire Code and any City of Dothan Fire Codes.

#### Small Arms Ammunition

Any display of small arms ammunition including smokeless propellant, black powder, and small arms primer must adhere to Alabama and City of Dothan Fire Code.

- No more than 20 pounds of smokeless propellants, in containers or 1 pound or less capacity each on display.
- No more than 1 pound of black powder shall be displayed.
- No more than 10,000 small arms primers shall be displayed.

All ammunition not on display must adhere to the storage requirements of Alabama and City of Dothan Fire Code.

- Quantities more than 20 pounds and less than 100 pounds shall be stored in portable wooden boxes having walls of at least 1-inch normal thickness.
- Quantities more than 100 pounds and less than 800 pounds shall be stored in nonportable storage cabinets having walls at least 1-inch nominal thickness.