



October 27, 2016

RE: Parade Floats requirements

The Fort Worth Fire Department, Bureau of Fire Prevention is charged with the enforcement of the Fire Code within the City of Fort Worth. When this office determines that an indoor or outdoor gathering of persons has an adverse impact on public safety, this office has the authority to order the development of, or prescribe a plan for, the provision of an approved level of public safety.

In order for any plan to be approved by this office, it must include the following requirements, which will affect the participants of the event:

- **Any motorized float, or any float with a liquid fueled generator, must be equipped with at least one fire extinguisher with a rating of no less than 2A10BC.**
- **All decorative material used on floats must be either non-combustible, or treated with a flame retardant.**
- **Hay will not be allowed during the Parade of Lights on any float that contains lights, generator or fuel tanks.**

There have been many questions raised in previous years regarding these two requirements. The following is an attempt to answer these questions, and hopefully, provide for better communications between our office and the participants this year.

If your float has any combustible material, including paper, cardboard, cloth, foam, etc., you may be asked by a fire inspector to produce documentation that you have had the material treated with a flame retardant. **It is highly suggested that you seek professional assistance for the application of such products**, as a reputable applicator will provide you with documentation to verify that the application was done properly.

If you choose to apply a flame retardant chemical yourself, you will be required to present a signed letter stating which product was applied, who manufactures the product, and a statement confirming that you applied the product in accordance with the manufacturer's directions. This does not have to be a formal certificate, but rather a simple document acknowledging that you have complied with this requirement. You may also be required to provide a copy of the manufacturer's documentation, which should indicate that the product is designed to be used on the material in question for the purpose of reducing the ability of the material to burn.

FIRE PREVENTION DIVISION

Fort Worth Fire Department 📍 1000 Throckmorton Street 📍 Fort Worth, Texas 76102

This office cannot recommend specific flame retardant products. However, if you have a question about a particular product, you're welcome to contact us to discuss its approved use.

You will not be required to present testing data on the use of a fire retardant product, as that data should have already been collected by a listing agency, such as Underwriters Laboratories or Factory Mutual, and does not need to be duplicated. However, if the product documentation is not available, the fire inspector may require that a field test be conducted. It is not likely that this will occur, provided that the proper documentation is available. It is your responsibility to ensure that the documentation is available onsite.

Fire extinguishers have been required on all floats in the past. This was actually an explicit fire code requirement until 2001, at which time the code changed allowing the code official more flexibility in applying such rules. This office has continued to apply the requirements as written in the previous codes. However, we feel that requiring the fire extinguishers to be provided on motorized floats, and floats with liquid fueled generators meets the intent of the previous requirements, and allows for an approved level of public safety.

If your float is not compliant with these requirements, you will not be allowed to participate in the event, and your float must be removed from the area. However, the fire inspector will be onsite during the entire event, and if the issues can be resolved prior to the step off, the inspector will certainly allow you time to do so.

We understand that the entrants of this parade are largely non-profit and small organizations, and that the budgets for these floats may be small. However, the requirements noted above should not add significantly to the cost of participating. We welcome any questions from the participants and look forward to helping in any way to ensure a safe event for all. You may call this office at 817-392-6831 for any questions or concerns you may have.

Thank you,
Daren Partridge
Fort Worth Fire Department