

Harris County  
**HCPHES**  
 Public Health & Environmental Services

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## OPERATIONAL STATEMENT FOR TEMPORARY FOOD ESTABLISHMENTS

Dates of Temporary Event: From \_\_\_\_\_ Through \_\_\_\_\_

Time of Temporary Event: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Temporary Event: \_\_\_\_\_

Address of Event: \_\_\_\_\_

Operator of Food Booth (s): \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Food Booths Run by the Same Operator: \_\_\_\_\_

Location of Each Food Booth:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

Food To Be Served: \_\_\_\_\_

Where Food Will Be Prepared: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Cooking Equipment: \_\_\_\_\_

Method of Garbage Disposal: \_\_\_\_\_

APPLICATION FOR FOOD PERMIT
HARRIS COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH and ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES
2223 W. Loop S., Houston, Texas 77027
(713) 439-6270

Est. Number XX Type code XX Risk Code X Name of Event
Owner Phone Number ( )
Mailing Address City St. Zip
District # Incorp. City
Water Supply Public Well, TNRCC# No Water Required

Mobile Units/Roadside Vendors
Vehicle Description License Plate #
Central Preparation Facility Water Source Documents

Office use Only

Renewal New Change of Ownership

- 1. Food Establishment Category (A) \$250.00
2. Food Establishment Category (B) \$175.00
3. Food Establishment Category (C) \$100.00
4. Food Establishment Category (D) \$ 50.00
5. Mobile Food Vendor (Food Preparation) \$150.00
6. Roadside Vendors (No Food Preparation) \$ 75.00
7. Duplicate or Replacement Permit \$ 25.00
8. Temporary Bg. End \$ 50.00
9. Late Temporary. End \$100.00
10. Non Profit in an Incorporated City \$ 0.00
11. Seasonal (120 days or less) \$100.00

Amount Due \$

Paid 200
Payment Form
AMOUNT \$
Receipt No.
For 200 Permit
Permit No.
Signature of Employee
Receiving Fee:

READ BEFORE SIGNING

In making application for a FOOD PERMIT which is necessary to operate my business, I understand and agree to comply with the Texas Food Establishment Rules and State Laws that may govern the conduct or operation of my business. I understand that failure to obtain a Food Permit could result in a citation being issued or charges being filed for operating without a permit. I will submit the required fee payment and approved application within seven (7) days or by expiration date

Signature of Operator: X Date:
(Please sign)

Approved by: Date:

MAKE CHECK PAYABLE TO: HARRIS COUNTY PHES

Mailing address: 2223 W. Loop S., Houston, Texas 77027
Attention: Environmental Public Health Division

PLEASE ENCLOSE APPLICATION WITH YOUR PAYMENT
PLEASE ALLOW 4 WEEKS FOR MAIL DELIEVERY

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## TEMPORARY FOOD PERMITS

### *What are temporary food service establishments?*

Temporary food service establishments are food booths, which are associated with a particular event for no longer than 14 days. Temporary food establishments include any food booth in which food and/or drink is prepared and/or served.

### *What is the purpose of permitting and inspecting temporary food establishments?*

The permitting and inspection program's primary goal is to protect the public's health. To accomplish this, Harris County Public Health & Environmental Services (HCPHES) wants to insure that all temporary food service establishments:

- are properly constructed and equipped
- prepare, store and serve food and/or drink in a manner that minimizes opportunities for contamination.

### *Will my temporary food booth be inspected?*

Yes. Both non-profit and profit temporary food establishments will be inspected by a Harris County Environmental Public Health Investigator at least once during the event. Of major concern to the inspector will be cleanliness, food storage arrangements, personal hygienic practices and proper food temperatures. Violations concerning these areas will be expected to be corrected immediately. Feel free to ask the investigator questions. The investigator is there to assist you in providing safe, sanitary food to the public. Refer to the handout: "Sanitation Guidelines for Temporary Food Vendors."

***Must temporary food service establishment purchase a permit to operate?***

Yes. Temporary food service establishments that are located in areas under the HCPHES' jurisdiction must obtain a temporary food permit to operate.

- All establishments that serve food and/or drinks and/or scoop ice must purchase a permit.
- A permit issued to a permanent establishment will only cover a temporary booth at that same address if the booth is owned by that same person.
- A separate temporary food permit is required for every food booth at any given event.

***If a food vendor is operating more than one food booth, how many permits must he/she purchase?***

- A permit must be purchase for each food booth.

***What are the exemptions to the temporary food establishment permit?***

- Booths that sell only pre-packaged, non-potentially hazardous food (candy, chips, frozen novelties) or unopened canned or bottle drinks are exempted from the temporary permit requirement.
- Non-profit temporary establishments that provide proof of their non-profit status, (Tax Form 501C3) are also exempt, as long as all proceeds go to the charity. A non-profit, temporary food service establishment is defined as a booth, which is operated directly be members of the charity organization; **all** proceeds go to the charity. A food booth, which donates a portion of its proceeds to a charity, would **not** be considered a non-profit temporary establishment.

***How much does a temporary food permit cost?***

The cost of a temporary food permit is \$50.00, provided that it is purchase **at least 2 full business days prior to the beginning of the event, excluding Sundays and holidays.** Failure to purchase a temporary permit within these guidelines will result in a fee of \$100.00

***How do I obtain a temporary food permit?***

Anyone who plans to operate a temporary food establishment should contact the Environmental Public Health Division of HCPHES prior to the event. A list of sanitation guidelines and an operations questionnaire will be sent/given to you. You will save money if you purchase your permit at least 2 business days prior to the event.

**You may purchase a permit in several ways:**

- **In person** – You may purchase the permit at the Environmental Public Health Office  
Harris County Public Health and Environmental Services  
2223 W. Loop S., Suite 529  
Houston, Texas 77027  
Monday -Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

- **BY MAIL** – Requests for a permit application to be mailed to you must be made **AT LEAST FIVE WEEKS PRIOR TO THE EVENT**. The permit application, permit fee and operations questionnaire must be returned to the Environmental Public Health office, **NO LATER THAN FOUR WEEKS PRIOR TO THE EVENT**. Permits purchased **later** than for weeks prior to the event **MUST** be obtained from the Environmental Public Health office, and **MUST** be paid for with cash, money order, or cashier's check. You may request to purchase a permit through the mail by calling our office at (713) 439-6270.
- **ONLINE** – to [www.hcphe.org](http://www.hcphe.org). Fill out the operational statement and send it back to Environmental website for approval within 3 weeks of the event. Upon approval to operate the temporary food booth, you may purchase the permit online by means of a charge card or an e-check. Payment must be made within 14 days of the start of the event. Or you may send a personal or business check to the Environmental Public Health office no later than 4 weeks prior to the beginning of the event. Payment made within 4 weeks of the event may be made in person by cash, cashier's check or money order at the Environmental Public Health office.
- **ONSITE** – The permit **should** be purchased prior to the event. Late temporary permits may be purchased at the event with a money order or cashier's check if the booth is in compliance with health code standards. Food booths operating without a valid and current permit may be asked to close if the operation poses a health hazard or if the permit is not purchased on site. Money orders and cashier's checks **ONLY** will be accepted at the event site. **Investigators will not collect cash at the temporary event site.**

***What happens if my food booth does not comply with the requirements for temporary food establishments or if I refuse to buy a temporary permit?***

You will be asked to cease all food operations. Continuation of operations will result in an appeal to the Harris County Sheriff's Department for assistance.

**NOTE: The Fire Marshall's Office conducts safety inspections of temporary events. See attached handouts for fire safety guidelines.**

Harris County  


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**HCPHES**  


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## SANITATION GUIDELINES FOR TEMPORARY FOOD VENDORS

### I. FOOD SUPPLY

- A. Food should be in sound condition, free from spoilage, filth or any other type of contamination and shall be safe for human consumption.
- B. Foods shall not be prepared in the home, but must be from an approved commercial source.

### II. STORAGE OF POTENTIALLY HAZARDOUS FOODS

- A. Food shall be stored in clean containers and kept covered.
- B. Product temperatures shall be maintained at 41°F or below, or at 135°F or above.
- C. A metal stem thermometer shall be provided to check food temperatures.

### III. WASTE DISPOSAL – Facilities or containers shall be provided to retain all liquid and solid waste.

### IV. CONSTRUCTION OF BOOTH

- A. Booth or stand shall be constructed in such a manner as to prevent entrance of flies, dust, dirt and other foreign matter. This includes a wing or dining canopy to cover food preparation areas.
- B. The interior surfaces shall be in good repair and readily cleanable.
- C. The surface under the booth must be graded to drain and should be of a hard surface (concrete or asphalt) unless covered by mats, removable platforms or duckboards to minimize the amount of dust and mud.
- D. The booth shall be protected on 3 sides from the public (Create a partition using string, rope, tables, chairs or soda canisters.)

### V. EQUIPMENT AND UTENSIL STORAGE – Food equipment and single service items shall be at least 6 inches above flooring.

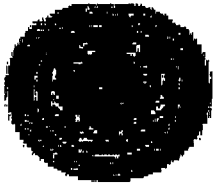
### VI. EQUIPMENT AND UTENSIL CLEANING AND SANITIZING

- A. A clean 3-compartment sink or 3 containers shall be provided for the purpose of washing, rinsing and sanitizing the food contact surfaces of all equipment and utensils.
- B. Liquid chlorine bleach shall be provided for use in sanitizing work surfaces (1/3 cup per 5 gallons of water.)

### VII. HYGIENIC PRACTICES

- A. An insulated container with a spigot shall be provided with warm water from an approved source for hand washing only. The hand wash facility shall include a wastewater “catch” container, soap, disposable towels and a waste receptacle.
- B. Disposable plastic gloves shall be provided and used for serving line personnel. (These should be disposed of and new ones used after every absence from the work station.)
- C. Food service workers shall wear effective hair restraints (hair nets, caps or scarves.)
- D. No one shall eat, drink or smoke while preparing food.

### VIII. TOILET FACILITIES – Toilet facilities must be available nearby.



## Temporary Food Vendors, Festivals, and Theatrical Performances

### ***Are there specific electrical requirements?***

Yes. All electrical components must meet IFC-2003 requirements for temporary electrical services. All appliances must be grounded and have grounding prongs intact. All electrical wiring and other components must be in good condition. No exposed wiring or splices are allowed. All junction boxes and appliances must be UL listed for the intended use, and have all safety guards in place. One GFI circuit breaker is required for any circuit located within 6 feet of a sink, wet well or other water source.

### ***Can I use extension cords?***

Yes. Extension cords may be used if they are placed where they will not be walked on by employees or the public; have grounding prongs intact; and have sufficient ampacity for the intended use. Minimum wire gauge is 14-gauge.

### ***Are fire extinguishers required in cooking booths?***

Yes. All cooking booths at festivals, fairs, carnivals and trade shows or exhibition events require at least one approved 2-A, 10-B: C portable fire extinguisher with current inspection date tag. All cooking booths exceeding 20 feet in any dimension will require a minimum of two 2-A, 10-B: C fire extinguishers with current date tags attached, mounted in a location that is fully visible and readily accessible. Larger booths may require additional fire extinguishers.

### ***Are there any special extinguisher requirements for deep fry cooking?***

Yes. Where deep fry cooking is performed using vegetable or animal oils or fats, at least one approved Tyke 'K' fire extinguisher with current inspection date tag is required. (Type 'K' fire extinguishers are for use only for cooking grease or oil fires (class 'B' fires) and are not to be used, or substituted for the required 2A, 10B:C fire extinguishers unless approved by the Fire Marshal.

### ***Are any barriers required around cooking equipment?***

Yes. All booths using portable cooking equipment shall provide protective barriers (such as chains, ropes, wooden barricades, or similar obstacles) to prevent public access or exposure to any cooking area that is fueled by LP-gas, wood, or charcoal. A minimum of 3 feet of clearance distance from the public, buildings, or combustible storage is required at all times. Temporary concrete barriers or similar type temporary barriers may be required to prevent damage from motorized vehicles.

### ***Can I store combustibles in the booth?***

Yes. All combustibles must be stored at least 18 inches away from hot surfaces or cooking appliances; 3 feet distance from LP-gas, wood, or charcoal fueled cooking areas. Highly combustible materials such as bales of hay or similar materials are prohibited inside buildings or any exit pathways. Remove trash, rubbish, and debris from booth areas.

### ***How many exits are required and how wide do they have to be?***

The number, location, and width of all exits must meet the requirements of IFC-2003. All booths must have unobstructed path of egress to the exit. Booths exceeding 20 feet in any direction must have two or more exits. The minimum exit width is 36 inches.

### ***Do I need a fire watch?***

When required by the Fire Marshal in the interest of public safety, one or more Fire Inspectors or other approved personal may be required to be on standby duty at an event. Fire Watch Personnel shall be required at all events where open flames or pyrotechnics are used by performers inside building. The number of Fire Watch Personnel required for these events shall be determined by the Fire Marshal. A fire watch fee, as established by Commissioners Court, may be charged to cover the cost of fire watch personnel and equipment.

Yes. The vehicle must meet IFC-2003 requirements for LP-gas fueled equipment, including fire extinguishers. LP-gas cylinders on motorized industrial vehicles can be changed out only at approved locations outside of the building. Cylinders CANNOT be replaced when the vehicle is inside a building.

### Charcoal / Wood Use

*Can liquid starters be used?*

Yes, but only approved charcoal starters, and only through December 31, 2005. After January 1, 2005 liquid charcoal starters or other flammable liquids are prohibited. Charcoal may be started with an electrical starter or other device designed for this purpose. Quick starting charcoal is also acceptable.

*Is there a minimum clearance away from charcoal or wood cooking equipment?*

Yes. All cooking equipment shall be at least 3 feet away from the public, buildings, or combustible materials.

*Is firebox protection required?*

Yes. A metal pan constructed of a minimum of No.18 U.S. gauge sheet metal shall be placed under the fire box of bar-b-que pits or fireboxes to catch live coals. The pan shall be large enough to provide complete coverage beneath any openings under the pit or firebox.

*What should I do with hot ashes or coals?*

Before moving a portable charcoal or wood cooker, all fires must be extinguished, and hot surfaces must be cold to the touch. Remove all ashes, cinders, and coals from the cooker, or be sure they are cold to the touch, before moving the cooker. Do not deposit hot ashes, cinders, smoldering coals or other hot materials in a combustible receptacle within 10 feet of other combustibles (including buildings, awnings, or partitions); or within 10 feet of openings to buildings (such as windows, fresh air vents or intakes, doors, or other wall penetrations).

### Theatrical Performers and Artisans

*Are there specific code requirements for the use of flame effects or pyrotechnics?*

Yes. Any performer or artisans who, in their performance, use any flame effects or pyrotechnics before an audience of 50 or more people must comply with the requirements of IFC-2003, Texas Occupations Code Chapter 2154, NFPA 160, and NFPA 1126.

*Is a separate permit required for the use of flame effects or pyrotechnics?*

Yes. A permit for flame effects or pyrotechnic use is required for this type of event. You can apply for a permit at the Harris County Fire Marshal's Office, 2318 Atascocita Rd. Humble TX. 77396 between the hours of 7:30 AM and 4:00 PM. The telephone number is 713-436-8000. The permit fee is \$200. This fee covers the plans review, site inspection, and display observer.

*Are there additional requirements for indoor use?*

Yes. Before flame effects or pyrotechnics can be used inside a building, you must have:

*Can I store combustibles in the booth?*

Yes. All combustibles must be stored at least 18 inches away from hot surfaces or cooking appliances; 3 feet distance from LP-gas, wood, or charcoal fueled cooking areas. Highly

combustible materials such as bales of hay or similar materials are prohibited inside buildings or any exit pathways. Remove trash, rubbish and debris from booth areas.

*How many exits are required and how wide do they have to be?*

The number, location, and width of all exits must meet the requirements of IFC-2003. All booths must have an unobstructed path of egress to the exit. Booths exceeding 20 feet in any direction must have two or more exits. The minimum exit width is 36 inches.

*Do I need a fire watch?*

When required by the Fire Marshal's Office in the interest of public safety, one or more Fire Inspectors or other approved personnel may be required to be on standby duty at an event. Fire Watch Personnel shall be required at all events where open flames or pyrotechnics are used by performers inside a building. The number of Fire Watch Personnel required for these events shall be determined by the Fire Marshal's Office. A fire watch fee, as established by Commissioners Court, may be charged to cover the cost of fire watch personnel and equipment.

### LP-Gas

*Who can connect LP-gas cylinders and equipment?*

Permit holder employees may perform connections for cylinders and equipment.

*How should I store spare LP-gas containers?*

The maximum number of cylinders shall be in accordance with IFC-2003. Storage should not exceed one-day's requirements unless approved in writing by the Fire Marshal's Office. Store spare LP-gas containers in locations not accessible to the public, and to reduce the risk of excessive temperature rise, physical damage, or tampering. Store the cylinder so the pressure relief valve is in the vapor space of the cylinder. Post clearly visible, approved "Danger - No Smoking" signs in the vicinity of stored cylinders.

*Is there a proper way to secure LP-gas cylinders?*

Yes. Secure all LP-gas cylinders (empty or full) in an upright position, and so they can't fall over. All pressure relief valves shall be directed away from the public. When required by the Fire Marshal's Office, cylinders must be secured in a non-combustible cabinet that is well ventilated, and surrounded by a temporary chain link fence not less than 6 feet in height.

*Are separate inspection stickers required for LP-fueled equipment?*

Yes. Commercial LP-gas equipment must be inspected annually, and must display an inspection sticker indicating the equipment has been inspected within the past 12-month period by licensed personnel.

*Can I operate motorized industrial vehicles inside a building?*

*Will I receive some documentation that a fire inspection has been conducted?*

Yes. You will receive a written report from the inspector, and a Fire Inspection Medallion that should be displayed in a conspicuous place. Your display of this medallion means that you agree to operate in compliance with applicable county requirements and other laws and regulations.

*May I use a tent, canopy, or open air structure?*

Yes, if the tent, canopy, or open air structure, including air-supported structures, meets IFC-2003 requirements. All booths, tents, table coverings, and other combustible materials composed of cloth, paper, plastic, and similar materials must be flame retardant, including any added material. This includes signage and/or awnings over cooking areas, or attached to the booth in any manner.

*Are there specific electrical requirements?*

Yes. All electrical components must meet IFC-2003, NFPA 70, National Electric Code (2005 ed) requirements for temporary electrical service. All appliances must be grounded and have grounding prongs intact. All electrical wiring and other components must be in good condition. No exposed wiring or splices are allowed. All junction boxes and appliances must be UL listed for the intended use, and have all safety guards in place. One GFI circuit breaker is required for any circuit located within 6 feet of a sink, wet well, or other water source.

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*Are there any special extinguisher requirements for deep fry cooking?*

Yes. Where deep fry cooking is performed using vegetable or animal oils or fats, at least one approved Type 'K' fire extinguisher with current inspection date tag is required. (Type 'K' fire extinguishers are for use only for cooking grease or oil fires (class "B" fires) and are not to be used, or substituted for the required 2A, 10B:C fire extinguishers unless approved by the Fire Marshal.)

*Are any barriers required around cooking equipment?*

Yes. All booths using portable cooking equipment shall provide protective barriers (such as chains, ropes, wooden barricades, or similar obstacles) to prevent public access or exposure to any cooking area that is fueled by LP-gas, wood, or charcoal. A minimum of 3 feet of clearance distance from the public, buildings, or combustible storage is required at all times. Temporary concrete barriers or similar type temporary barriers may be required to prevent damage from motorized vehicles.

**Davis, La'Travia (PHES)**

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**Subject:** FW: Calibration and TFER Tip

TFER Tip:

- ◆ The **hand wash facility for temporary events** must consist of an insulated container with a spigot (filled with warm potable water), a wastewater container, soap, paper towels and a waste receptacle. (pg. 137)



Thank you,

*Nancy Howard, R.S.*  
Compliance Coordinator - Food Safety  
Harris County Public Health & Environmental Services

4/22/2008