



Special Event Guidelines Décor and Special Effects

It is important that you provide information regarding the type of décor and special effects you plan to use at your proposed event so that you can receive the appropriate approvals prior to your event. Failure to receive approval for some types of décor and special effects may result in your inability to use these elements at your event.

Decor

Banners, pennants, flags, signs, streamers, inflatable displays and similar devices are typically regulated by local ordinances. The number and location for these items must be included in your site plan/route map and must receive approval from the City of San Diego. Under certain conditions, these items are prohibited or limited. For example, balloon releases are prohibited under the flight path or near beaches and bays. City Code Enforcement Officers may remove unauthorized décor and advertising in your permitted venue area and/or advertisers may be subject to fines.

Signage

Clear visible signage that can be seen over a crowd of people is important to the success of your event. All entrances, exits, start and finish lines should be clearly marked. Directional signage can help people locate food, entertainment, restroom facilities, and information areas making your event more user-friendly; resulting in enhanced pedestrian flow and the overall enjoyment of your event. Signage should meet accessibility standards.



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Lighting Special Effects

Use of special lighting and lasers will require additional permitting and safety requirements from the San Diego Fire-Rescue Department. The International Fire Code as amended by the State of California and City of San Diego mandates specific cut-off levels for the safe use of laser lights. Under certain conditions, these items are prohibited or limited. For example, there are specific guidelines for the use of lighting within a flight zone.

Pyrotechnics/Flame Effects

All activities associated with the use of pyrotechnics and open flames must be reviewed and approved by the San Diego Fire-Rescue Department in compliance with the International Fire Code as amended by the State of California and City of San Diego. Examples of pyrotechnic activities include indoor and outdoor fireworks, lasers, model rocket launches and special effects using pyrotechnical devices. A flame effect is the combustion of flammable solids, liquids, or gases to produce thermal, physical, visual, or audible phenomena before an audience. Some examples include hand-held burning torches, flaming batons, flame acts, fire walking, and flaming sword dancers. A permit and full demonstration to the Fire Marshal prior to your event date will be required.

As part of the permit requirements, onsite stand-by and inspection services may be required due to the size, complexity and/or unique safety issues regarding the activities associated with the proposed event.