



Division of Fire Safety
OFFICE OF THE STATE FIRE MARSHAL
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BULLETIN #	TITLE			DATE ISSUED
2015-06	Special Amusement Buildings (Haunted Houses)			September 22, 2015
SUPERSEDES	RELEASED BY	APPROVED BY	SOURCE	SUPERSEDED BY
2008-05	EJB	KAR	NFPA 101:12.4.7 & 13.4.7	

Informational Bulletin 2015-06
Special Amusement Buildings (Haunted Houses)

Purpose:

The purpose of this bulletin is to provide information as to the current fire & life safety requirements for “Haunted Houses” or “Special Amusement Buildings” as classified in Chapter 12 and 13 of the NFPA 101 Life Code (2009 Edition).

Definition:

Special Amusement Building – A building that is temporary, permanent, or mobile and contains a device or system that conveys passengers or provides a walkway along, around, or over a course in any direction as a form of amusement arranged so that the egress path is not readily apparent due to visual or audio distractions or an intentionally confounded egress path, or is not readily available due to the mode of conveyance through the building or structure. (1)

Fire Code Requirements: Chapter 12.4.7 and Chapter 13.4.7

General. Special amusement buildings, regardless of occupant load, shall meet the requirements for assembly occupancies in addition to the requirements of 12.4.7 and 13.4.7, unless the special amusement building is a multilevel play structure that is not more than 10 ft. in height and has aggregate horizontal projections not exceeding 160 ft².

Automatic Sprinklers. Every special amusement building, other than buildings or structures not exceeding 10 ft. in height and not exceeding 160 ft² in aggregate horizontal projection, shall be protected throughout by an approved, supervised automatic sprinkler system installed and maintained in accordance with Section 9.7.

Temporary Water Supply. Where the special amusement building is required to be sprinklered by 12.4.7.2 or 13.4.7.2 is movable or portable, the sprinkler water supply shall be permitted to be provided by an approved temporary means.

Smoke Detection. Where the nature of the special amusement building is such that it operates in reduced lighting levels, the building shall be protected throughout by an approved automatic smoke detection system in accordance with Section 9.6.

Alarm Initiation. Actuation of any smoke detection system device shall sound an alarm at a constantly attended location on the premises.

Illumination. Actuation of the automatic sprinkler system, or any other suppression system, or actuation of a smoke detection system having an approved verification or cross-zoning operation capability shall provide for the following:

- (1) Increase in illumination in the means of egress to that required by Section 7.8 (*Return to normal lighting levels*)
- (2) Termination of any conflicting or confusing sounds and visuals.

Exit Marking. Exit marking shall be in accordance with Section 7.10.

Floor proximity exit signs shall be provided in accordance with 7.10.1.6.

**In special amusement buildings where mazes, mirrors, or other designs are used to confound the egress path, approved directional exit marking that becomes apparent in an emergency shall be provided.*

Interior Finish. Interior wall and ceiling finish materials complying with Section 10.2 shall be Class A throughout.

There may be local ordinances or required permits that place additional restrictions or regulations on Special Amusement Buildings/Haunted Houses. Inspections must be requested by the property owner/event coordinator in advance of the event, which can be completed by the local fire department, who may request technical assistance from the State Fire Marshal's Office at their discretion.

If you have any questions, please feel free to give our office a call at (603) 223-4289.

References:

- (1) NFPA 101 2009 Edition, Ch. 3.3.32.10