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## FLOORING REQUIREMENTS FOR TEMPORARY FOOD FACILITIES

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Recent concerns regarding the use of generic 'poly-tarps' and approved flooring materials in general have created a need for uniform policy requirements among the Santa Clara County Environmental Health and Fire authorities. This policy shall serve as the official DEH requirement on this matter with consideration to the state and local fire regulations for tents and membrane structures.

The Department of Environmental Health requires that temporary food facilities handling non-prepackaged foods *and* operating in an environment of dirt, grass, decomposed granite, or other similar surfaces shall provide a floor covering constructed of smooth, non-absorbent, easily-cleanable materials. Cooking or heating elements inside the food booth itself trigger an added requirement that all membrane structures including flooring be treated with a flame retardant in an approved manner or have non-combustible characteristics. The use of generic "poly tarps" as an approved floor material does not satisfy the requirements of Chapter 24 of the California Fire Code.

The Santa Clara County Department of Environmental Health (DEH) *Requirements for Temporary Food Facilities* document states that:

- "ALL food and beverage booths MUST be constructed with four sides, a ceiling, and a floor as follows....floor surfaces MUST be smooth and cleanable....smooth pavement, plywood, canvas, etc....grass or dirt floors MUST be covered with approved tarps or plywood.

Furthermore, California Health and Safety Code Division 104 Part 7 Sec 114347 states:

- "Temporary food facilities that handle non-prepackaged food shall provide floors constructed of concrete, asphalt, tight wood, or other similar material kept in good repair."

Since the Department of Environmental Health requires temporary food facilities handling non-prepackaged foods who also operate in an environment of dirt, grass, or decomposed granite to provide approved floor coverings **and** the use of generic "poly tarps" does not satisfy the requirements of Article 32 Sec. 2404 of the California Fire Code, Environmental Health will not permit such use in violation of Fire regulations.

It should also be noted that barbecues, grills, or other equipment approved for outdoor cooking may be located adjacent to the temporary food facility if local building and fire codes prohibit cooking inside the temporary food facility (California Health and Safety Code Section 114341).

In the cases where cooking or heating equipment is set up within a temporary food facility located in a grass or dirt-like environment, both DEH and the local Fire authority will determine the conformity of any flooring materials in use.

Generally speaking the **Event Organizer** shall be deemed responsible for securing *or* verifying the use of approved flooring when more than one temporary food facility is under permit. Otherwise, the sole food or beverage permittee shall secure the required tent and floor structures.