



STATE OF DELAWARE  
OFFICE OF THE STATE FIRE MARSHAL

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DOVER OFFICE  
HEADQUARTERS

**GUIDELINES FOR HAUNTED HOUSES**

The Delaware State Fire Prevention Commission at its regular monthly meeting on September 18, 1990, at the request of the Delaware State Fire Marshal's Office, granted a special exception to the provisions of the 1988 Life Safety Code with respect to special amusement buildings known as haunted houses when used on a temporary basis.

The provisions contained herein shall be accepted as providing an equivalent level of safety to the provisions of Chapter 8, Section 4.6.2 and 4.6.3 as contained within the Life Safety Code.

1. This special exception shall only apply to haunted houses used on a temporary basis. Temporary shall mean open to the public for no more than 15 days within a calendar year.
2. **Permit Required** - No haunted house shall be operated without first receiving a permit for such operation from the Office of State Fire Marshal. The State Fire Marshal shall not issue such permit until he is satisfied that all provisions of the special exception are met.
3. **Building Limitations** - Haunted houses shall only be allowed to operate at the level of exit discharge as well as one story above the level of exit discharge. Provisions shall be made to bar occupants from entering any other area of the building. Further, haunted houses shall not be allowed in windowless buildings.
4. **Fire Department Standby** - A fire department standby crew shall be provided at the location of the haunted house at all times that it is open to the public. Fire department standby shall consist of a pumper, water supply of at least 1,000 gallons, a crew of four, and two-way radio communication with a dispatch center.
5. **Power - Type**  
Electric - Power Company / Generator / Other  
Electrical Inspection Required: Yes  
Electrical Inspection Agency inspects as a temporary installation  
Must be wired by a licensed electrician
6. **Exits -**  
Travel Distance - travel distance to outside of exit not to exceed 75 feet.  
Door Swing - all exit doors shall swing in direction of exit travel.  
Number of Exits (windows) - two emergency exits required from each floor or level.  
Window - four foot square landing with stairway permitted.

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7. **Exit Marking** - All exits shall be marked by readily visible signs. Sign should be illuminated by emergency lighting.
8. **Alarm System** - Smoke detectors (battery type) shall be maintained and located in all stairways, hallways and rooms on all levels.  
**P.A. System** - a P.A. system shall be available on site to notify occupants of evacuating.
9. **Number of Occupants and Workers** - The occupancy shall be limited to 25 people consisting of guests and workers.  
**Number of attendants with hand lights** - an attendant shall be located at each exit as well as each major attraction or room.
10. **Fire Extinguishers** - A fire extinguisher with a minimum rating of 2A:10BC shall be placed in each room of the occupancy and at each entrance or exit.
11. **Material and Wall Covering** - No foam rubber/urethane foam permitted in building. Black Plastic (fire resistive type only) or fire treated cloth may be used on wall.
12. **No Smoking** - No smoking in area, signs to be posted at entrance.
13. **No open flame** in or about attraction.
14. **Flammable Materials** - No flammables or readily combustible materials shall be used in decorations, sets, props, costumes, etc.
15. **No storage** beneath stairways or other unsafe practices.
16. **No portable heating units**
17. **Construction Materials** - Walls/Windows - 1/4 inch plywood may be used as covering (minimum standard)  
**Walls** - to consist of 3/8 plywood and/or drywall.
18. **Fire Drill** - Organization operating haunted house on a nightly or daily basis shall have a fire drill for their operators.
20. The operators of this attraction are responsible for good safety and fire protection practices.