



NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF LOUISIANA STATE FIRE MARSHAL

Department of Public Safety & Corrections • Public Safety Services
8181 Independence Blvd. • Baton Rouge, LA 70806

www.lasfm.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Ashley Rodrigue
Public Affairs Director

DATE: 9/17/20

PHONE: 225-620-5115
ashley.rodrigue@la.gov

State Fire Marshal Approval, COVID-19 Standards Required for Haunted Houses

BATON ROUGE- The start of Halloween season is upon us which means, normally, dozens of haunted house attractions would be under construction and preparing to open to the public all across Louisiana.

However, this year, the state's COVID-19 pandemic emergency is restricting many of our normal activities. Gov. John Bel Edwards' latest proclamation regarding COVID-19 mitigation measures for businesses and religious organizations, 117 JBE 2020, currently calls for indoor amusements like haunted houses to remain closed. But the proclamation also allows for amusements like this to submit a proposal to be given special permission to open.

Haunted house operators can access details on how to submit these requests, as well as what type of considerations should be included in the proposals, on OpenSafely.la.gov in the document for "Other Amusements."

In addition, the State Fire Marshal's Office (SFM) would like to remind operators about the regular life safety and fire safety requirements our deputies will be looking for when inspecting attractions for approved occupancy, if allowed to open.

For temporary "special amusement structures" and/or "Ghost Walks" (i.e. not operational for more than 30 days):

- A sketch of the facility, along with documentation and materials, emergency plans and equipment must be submitted to the SFM for review and approval prior to the use of the building or space as a temporary "Special Amusement" activity
- Interior finishes and decorations/props shall be flame-resistant
- If the building operates in a reduced lighting environment, the building should contain an approved automatic smoke detection system that (a) will sound an alarm louder than the greatest ambient noise level (b) will sound at a constantly manned location where the attendant will be capable of turning on additional lighting for emergency evacuation
- Occupant load constantly controlled to no more than 25 occupants at any given time

- Fire department presence during all periods of activity OR ABC-type fire extinguishers in each room with a person trained in their proper use AND a garden hose connected to adequate water supply long enough to reach into every area of the structure
- Exit and directional signage
- Artificial smoke is prohibited; dry ice is acceptable
- Accessible parking and an accessible route to the entrance of the attraction is required and should include stable, firm and slip-resistant walking surfaces.

For permanent “haunted house” or “special amusement” structures, projects must be submitted to the SFM for a full plan review prior to construction. Visit lasfm.org for plan submittal instructions and requirements.

If you’re planning to patron a haunted house attraction, we encourage you to develop an emergency meeting location with the group you are attending with and/or instruct children to locate uniformed personnel in the event they find themselves lost and without an emergency meeting location.

The SFM encourages reporting any concerning conditions at special amusement structures to 1-800-256-5452 or filing a complaint through our website, lasfm.org.

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