

**CHANGE TYPE:** Clarification

**CHANGE SUMMARY:** A new definition is added for umbrella structures which results in regulation of umbrella structures when they exceed 400 square feet.

**2018 CODE:**

### SECTION 202 DEFINITIONS

**TENT.** A structure, enclosure, umbrella structure or shelter, with or without sidewalls or drops, constructed of fabric or pliable material supported by any manner except by air or the contents it protects (see “Umbrella structure”).

**UMBRELLA STRUCTURE.** A structure, enclosure or shelter with or without sidewalls or drops, constructed of fabric or pliable material supported by a central pole or poles (see “Tent”).

**CHANGE SIGNIFICANCE:** Umbrella structures are available that meet or exceed an individual size of 400 square feet. This new definition will include umbrella structures under the definition of “Tent.” Therefore, wherever the term tent is used, it now specifically includes umbrella structures. Essentially, an umbrella structure is a tent with one center pole, or multiple center poles, rather than perimeter support poles.

Umbrella structures are available with optional accessories that allow multiple umbrellas to be connected to each other for additional size and stability which can offer extended weather protection. These accessories include rain gutter systems, side panels (with or without support poles), and additional electrical wiring for lights and heater attachments. These accessories allow the umbrella structures to mimic a tent without being considered a “tent” under the conventional use of the term “Tent.”

Umbrellas are typically not regulated because of their singular use and limited size. But, when connected or attached, they represent the same hazards as a tent or membrane structure.

The result of these changes is:

- Fabric must meet the flame-spread characteristics required for tents.
- A permit is required for single umbrella structures over 400 square feet, or when the aggregate of multiple umbrella structures results in an area over 700 square feet.
- Umbrella structures must be separated from buildings and property lines.
- Umbrella structures must be structurally sound.

## Chapter 31

### Umbrella Structures



International Code Council®

This umbrella structure is regulated as a tent.



This excerpt is taken from ***Significant Changes to the International Fire Code®, 2018 Edition.***

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