

CHANGE TYPE: Clarification

CHANGE SUMMARY: Special event structures, newly defined in Section 202, are now included in the types of temporary structures that are regulated by both the *International Building Code* (IBC) and the *International Fire Code* (IFC).

2021 CODE TEXT: 3103.1 General. The provisions of Sections 3103.1 through 3103.4 shall apply to structures erected for a period of less than 180 days. Special event structures, tents, umbrella structures and other membrane structures erected for a period of less than 180 days shall also comply with the *International Fire Code*. Those erected for a longer period of time shall comply with applicable sections of this code.

202 SPECIAL EVENT STRUCTURE. Any ground-supported structure, platform, stage, stage scaffolding or rigging, canopy, tower or similar structure supporting entertainment-related equipment or signage.

CHANGE SIGNIFICANCE: The special requirements that are applicable to temporary structures are set forth in Section 3103. For the purpose of applying the applicable code provisions, “temporary” is considered as being erected for a time period of less than 180 days. The IFC contains a significant number of provisions applicable to such structures. In addition, the IBC identifies some key criteria that must be applied to temporary structures, including conformity with the structural strength, fire safety, means of egress, accessibility, light, ventilation and sanitary requirements. Permits are typically required, as are construction documents. The scope of Section 3103 has previously been limited to tents, umbrella structures and other membrane structures. Special event structures, as defined in Section 202, are now included in the types of temporary structures that are regulated by the IBC and IFC.

3103.1

Special Event Structures



Photo courtesy of Fish Scale

Special event structures at music festival.

The new definition in the IBC provides consistency with the IFC definition that was initially established in the 2018 edition. Because special event structures are temporary in nature, such structures are primarily regulated by the IFC for the purposes of approval, permitting, length of use, document submittal, location on lot and inspections. In addition to the provisions mandated by the IFC, limited requirements of the IBC must also be met. Where the structure is to remain in place for a period of 180 days or more, it is to be regulated in the same manner any other “permanent” building or structure by the applicable provisions of the IBC.



This excerpt is taken from *Significant Changes to the International Building Code®*, 2021 Edition. The Significant Changes series takes you directly to the most important changes that impact projects. Key changes are identified then followed by in-depth discussion of how the change affects real-world application. Photos, tables and illustrations are included to further clarify application. Available for the IBC, IRC, IFC, IECC and IPC/IMC/IFGC, the Significant Changes publications are very useful training and review tools for transitioning to a new code edition.