



Allegan County Parks, Recreation, & Tourism

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ALLEGAN COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION SPECIAL EVENT-USE PERMIT POLICY/GUIDELINES

PURPOSE:

To describe the process for permitting Special Event-Uses on Allegan County Park property and to ensure consistent and appropriate standards of review and conditions of use for Special Events that are beyond the scope of a pavilion reservation or typical park use.

BACKGROUND:

Allegan County Parks are recognized as valuable assets in which the community has invested a significant amount of resources and during the season are used and enjoyed by residents and non-residents alike. These valuable assets are also in high demand by public, private, and non-profit groups for Special Events, such as weddings, fundraisers, fishing tournaments, and large-scale company picnics.

Because most Special Events involve large groups of people and/or the use of special equipment, such as portable stages, dunk tanks, booths, or large tents, they have greater-than-normal impacts on park facilities, which can include additional trash in the park, parking lot and boat launch congestion, need for additional park maintenance, and damage to grounds. These impacts can also affect visitor enjoyment and safety. This policy was developed to help control and prepare for the impact that Special Events/Uses have on park property and visitors.

POLICY/GUIDELINES:

All persons or groups wishing to conduct activities on Allegan County Park property that meet the definition of **“Special Event”** must secure a **Special Event-Use Permit from the Allegan County Parks & Recreation Department**.

DEFINITIONS:

“Special Event” – Any activity that **meets one or more** of the following criteria:

- Any activity that has more than 50 participants
 - If pavilion reservation has been made:
 - For Dumont Park, Gun Lake Park, West Side Park (activity that has more than 75 participants)
 - For Bysterveld Park (activity that has more than 100 participants)
 - For Littlejohn Lake Park (activity that has more than 150 participants)

- Has live musical entertainment
- Any activity which requires the use of **Special Equipment***
 - ***Special Equipment** – Equipment brought on to park property that requires advance set-up (i.e. portable stages, sound equipment, portable climbing walls, amusement equipment such as bounce houses or dunk tanks, booths, large BBQ grills used for pig roasts, tents/canopies larger than 10'x 10', tables, and chairs).
 - Exemptions: Equipment intended for personal use, such as coolers, beach chairs, small folding tables, and personal BBQ grills; and tents and canopies that are 10' x 10' or smaller will not be considered "Special Equipment".
- Has animals on display, for show or for rides
- Fee collection on park property (admissions, concession, or merchandise sales)
- The general public is invited or notified by the media
- Any organized and/or sponsored event, such as fishing tournaments, festivals, charity events, sporting events, etc.

SPECIAL EVENT-USE PERMIT PROVISIONS:

- ALCOHOL IS PROHIBITED IN ALL ALLEGAN COUNTY PARKS
- All Special Event-use participants are subject to County Ordinance #1010 (Parks Rules and Regulations).
- The rights accruing under this permit shall not be assigned or transferred without the written consent of the Parks staff or Commission Representative.
- The issuance of a Special Event-Use Permit does not grant exclusive use of the park facility.
- Parking spaces and picnic areas (other than pavilions) cannot be reserved. They are available on a first come, first served basis.
- Set-up locations for items, such as special equipment, animals, etc brought into the park are at the discretion of Parks Staff.
- All special events organizers are responsible for the removal of trash and debris caused by or related to the special event. For events attracting a large number of people, it is recommended that trash removal services be contracted with a private vendor. Special events organizers shall not commit, cause, or allow to be committed any damage of, or injury to, said premises.

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- Parks Management and the Parks Commission reserves the right to deny or cancel permit at any time.
- Equestrian Events: Any group that holds a riding event on State Game Area property will need to obtain a DNR Special Event Permit in addition to the Allegan County Special Event-Use Permit (includes equestrian trails that are located beyond the Silver Creek boundary. Events held inside SC boundaries require a county permit only. See attached campground map for SC Park boundary lines). Contact Michigan State DNR Plainwell Service Center at 269-685-6851 as soon as possible to obtain your DNR Special Event Permit.
- Fishing Tournaments: Permits will not be issued for Holidays Weekends
- Fishing Tournaments: Parking is available on a first, come first serve basis. Permits are issued for events to utilize NO MORE than 80% of the parking capacity of the park. Events that have greater capacity needs are permitted if off-site parking is secured by the tournament organizer and is so noted in the permit application.
- Fishing Tournaments: Approval of permit does not waive launch fees. It shall be the responsibility of the tournament organizer to collect all necessary daily user fees from tournament participants and convey said fees to the Commission as directed within the permit (exception: Gun Lake boat launch has an automated entry fee gate).

PROCEDURE FOR APPLING FOR A SPECIAL EVENT—USE PERMIT:

1. Any person, group, or organization wishing to acquire a Special Event-Use Permit must submit a Special Event- Use Permit Application, a nonrefundable \$25.00 Permit Fee, and Certificate of Liability Insurance (if applicable) naming Allegan County as additional insured at least 14 calendar days prior to event.
2. All properly submitted Special Event-Use requests will be reviewed by the Parks Administration for approval. A Special Event- Use request that asks for the waiver of any established park fee will also need the approval of the Allegan County Parks Commission (please remember they only meet once a month so the application must be turned in, in the appropriate time frame).
3. All Special Event-use Permits will require a non-refundable permit fee in the amount of \$25.00.
4. Most Special Event-Use requests will require a certificate of liability insurance naming Allegan County as an additional insured. Please check with the Parks Administration to see if your event will require a certificate of liability insurance.
5. The considerations of approval for a Special Event-Use Permit request are as follows:

- Impact on normal park activities
 - Impact on planned maintenance or construction activities
 - The potential for Special Event-Use to cause injury to visitors
 - The potential for Special Event-Use to cause damage to park property
 - Impact to park neighbors and surrounding property owners
6. Once the Special Event-Use request has been approved by Allegan County Parks, you will receive a letter, stating whether the special event –use was approved and if there are any contingences for the event, and a signed copy of the special use permit application, which must be present with you on the day of the event.

PROCEDURE FOR EVENTS THAT REQUEST ADVANCED CAMPSITE REGISTRATION AT COUNTY OWNED/OPERATED CAMPGROUNDS:

1. Special Event-Uses that occur in the Allegan County owned or operated campgrounds that request advanced campsite registration (prior to January 1, of the year of the event) for their event organizers in their submitted special event-use permit application, if approved will have to pay for the sites from November 1st - December 15th of the calendar year preceding the event. In addition to the items listed above under procedures, campsite requests must also include the following:
 - a. Campsites requested for advance registration can only be for the event organizers and must be specified by campsite number. **(Note: The total number of sites requested shall not exceed 10.)**
 - b. The name, address, phone number and e-mail address (if applicable) for the person that will be camping at each reserved campsite.
 - c. Dates for which each campsite will be reserved. **(Note: There is a two night minimum stay required for each campsite reserved in advance.)**
2. All campsite and reservation fees are NON-REFUNDABLE.