



BACKYARD EVENTS TIPS AND RESOURCES

Use of premises

Hosting backyard parties **for a fee** will result in violation notices and/or fines related to the improper use of your residential space. Additionally, your event may be shut down by City Departments such as the Boston Police, Boston Fire and/or Inspectional Services.

If you are considering hosting an event and you have questions about the allowable use of your property, please call Inspectional Services at 617-635-5300 or email isd@boston.gov for further guidance.

Tents

Erecting backyard tents may require a permit depending on the size. Additional guidance can be found here: [Requirements and Business Process for the Issuance of a Tent Permit](#)

In order to add certain outdoor features to your land (such as a garage, deck, pool, awning, etc.) a homeowner may be required to pull a permit. For more information, please visit [How to get a use of premises permit | Boston.gov](#)

Food/drink sales

All special events citywide must go through the Special Events Office at City Hall to obtain all of the appropriate licensing approvals from all City Departments. Selling TCS food (perishable foods, meat, chicken, rice etc.) and drinks that are prepared out of a residential home is not allowed. As an alternative, residents may:

1. Contact a licensed catering business to have food prepared and delivered from a licensed restaurant.
2. Contact a licensed food truck to distribute food at your event space.

Non-TCS (non-perishable foods) commercially pre-packaged foods (soda, chips, candy) do not require a Health Permit. These violations could lead to other administrative actions. To learn more about our food service regulation and codes, please visit [Health Division | Boston.gov](#).

Noise complaints

The City of Boston noise ordinance makes it unlawful to disturb the peace by allowing noise to become excessive. The source can come from things such as amplifiers, instruments or general noise stemming from outdoor gatherings. Please be respectful of neighbors when hosting gatherings inside and outside of your home. **The City code mandates noise to stop from 11:00 PM to 7:00 AM.** Noise should be within acceptable levels during allowed hours of ordinance.

If you have reason to believe that a noise ordinance is being violated, please use the following city services to make a complaint:

Call 311 (617-635-4500) - the complaint will be logged into the system for follow up. Multiple property complaints can be flagged for our [Problem Properties Task Force](#).

Call 911 - In some cases, noise may be so excessive that you will need to call the Boston Police Department (BPD).. Please note that in many cases, BPD may be responding to life safety situations and you may not see an immediate response to a noise complaint. Rest assured that when the call volume and responses to emergencies subside, BPD will investigate the noise complaint.