



IN REPLY REFER TO:

United States Department of the Interior  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
Mount Rushmore National Memorial  
13000 Highway 244  
Building 31, Suite 1  
Keystone, South Dakota 57751

**SPECIAL USE PERMIT GUIDELINES FOR EVENTS AT  
MOUNT RUSHMORE NATIONAL MEMORIAL**

*The National Park Service Organic Act states, "[The National Park Service] shall promote and regulate the use of the [national parks] by such means and measures as conform to the fundamental purpose of the said parks..., which purpose is to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wild life therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such a manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations."*

Many requests are received to use the Mount Rushmore National Memorial for various reasons. When such requests are inappropriate, they are denied. Frequently, because of lack of space, funds, staff resources, etc., even appropriate uses have to be denied; however, **compatible, non-commercial (does not involve the buying and selling of goods or services)** use of the Mount Rushmore amphitheater is permitted from time to time with a Special Use Permit. A Special Use Permit is issued by the Superintendent to an individual, group, or organization to authorize use of National Park Service-administered resources. A compatible use is defined as an activity that is consistent with applicable legislation, Federal regulations and administrative policies, is in accordance with the purpose of the memorial, avoids visitor use conflicts, and does not create unacceptable impacts to memorial resources.

As a matter of information to you regarding events at Mount Rushmore National Memorial, the possibility exists for the cancellation of all special events due to a national or regional crisis related to security issues. Because the memorial has been designated as one of the "icon" parks within our nation that may be targeted for terrorist activity, the status of the memorial's operations is linked directly to the national threat level declared by the Office of Homeland Security; or, in some cases, by the Director of the National Park Service. At the "**Red**" (highest) level, when there is a severe risk of terrorist attack, a full scale closure will go into effect. That would necessitate the immediate and complete closure of the memorial. At the "Orange" and "Yellow" levels, closure of any portion of the memorial's facilities may be considered on a case-by-case basis or day-by-day basis. There may also be the case of a local heightened threat level that would require restrictions or closures. The Superintendent will make that decision based upon the specific situation and local conditions as changes occur. We are providing this information to you as a courtesy in case you wish to consider other alternatives.

**Special events in the amphitheater are allowed May 1 through October 31. No special events will be allowed in the amphitheater or on the Borglum View Terrace from June 25 through July 5 due to the Independence Day special event scheduled annually at the Memorial.** The amphitheater is closed to special events from November 1 through April 30. These dates are subject to change at anytime.

Special events in the amphitheater must be held before our regularly scheduled evening program.

### **Evening Program Schedule**

Memorial Day weekend through August 14.....nightly at 9:00 p.m.  
August 15 through September 30.....nightly at 8:00 p.m.

### **Times the Amphitheater is Available for Special Events**

May 1 through the Friday before Memorial Day weekend.....nightly from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.\*  
Memorial Day weekend through August 14.....nightly from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.\*  
August 15 through September 30.....nightly from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.\*  
October 1 through October 31.....daily from 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.\*

**\* Within these times, the individual, group, society, or organization that will assume responsibility for the gathering must set up for the event, perform, remove all equipment and furniture, and clean-up the amphitheater area.**

Requests to use the amphitheater earlier in the day between May 1 and October 31 will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. These dates and times are subject to change at anytime.

### **WHO MAY APPLY**

Any individual, group, society, or organization that will assume responsibility for the gathering may apply for a Special Use Permit.

### **REQUESTING A SPECIAL USE PERMIT**

Requests for a Special Use Permit must be made by completing the *Application for Special Use Permit* form. A completed application must be accompanied by an application fee in the form of a cashiers check or money order in the amount of \$50.00 made payable to National Park Service. Application and administrative charges are non-refundable. The completed application needs to be mailed to "Permit Coordinator" at the address found on the first page of the application at least 30 days prior to the date of the event.

### **FIRST AMENDMENT RIGHTS**

When answering the First Amendment question on the application, please keep in mind First Amendment rights include freedom of speech, the press, religion, and assembly.

### **ISSUING A SPECIAL USE PERMIT**

When a completed application for permission to use the amphitheater is received, along with the required non-refundable application fee, a decision will be made to allow or deny special usage based on appropriateness, availability, timeliness, size of crowd, etc. If the use is to be permitted, a Special Use Permit outlining conditions governing the special usage, payment of the balance of the fee, and insurance and bonding requirements will be completed and sent to the requester. If the request is to be denied, a letter explaining the denial will be sent to the requester.

The permittee must sign and return the permit for the Superintendent's signature.

After the Superintendent signs the permit, the completed permit will be forwarded to the permittee along with a letter outlining how to proceed with the planning and execution of their special activity.

### **FACILITY USE FEE**

At this time, there is no park facility use fee.

### **COST RECOVERY**

Use of the amphitheater requires the scheduling of the park's maintenance, interpretive, and law enforcement staffs to provide appropriate care for resources and visitors; therefore, park staff must be available to work an event before the event is permitted.

**The permittee will be charged \$40 per hour for each National Park Service ranger assigned to work the special event.** The number of rangers assigned to work the event will be determined by the length of the event, number of attendees, etc. The ranger(s) may start working one hour prior to the event start time and stop working one hour after the event ends. The number of hours actually worked by the park ranger(s) is what will be billed. A bill of collection will be sent to the permittee after the event outlining the charges for the NPS ranger(s)' time. A check or money order in the amount due will need to be mailed to Mount Rushmore National Memorial within 30 days of receiving the bill for collection.

### **PERFORMANCE BONDS**

Performance bonds or deposits are the permittee's guarantee of compliance with permit conditions and reimbursement to the Memorial for damage to resources and/or facilities as a result of the permittee's activities. An amount adequate to cover the cost of restoration, repair, rehabilitation and cleanup of the area may be required.

### **LIABILITY INSURANCE**

Liability insurance protects the government from negligent actions by permittees. Insurance in an amount sufficient to protect the interests of the United States government may be required as a condition of the permit. The permittee must carry general liability insurance issued by a United States company with the U.S. Department of Interior, National Park Service names as "additionally insured." In general, a minimum of \$1 million per occurrence general liability policy is required.

### **PROPERTY INSURANCE**

Adequate property insurance coverage may be required whenever a Federal facility is being made available pursuant to a permit.

### **HOLD HARMLESS CLAUSE**

The Federal government, its agents and employees, cannot be held liable for claims for damages or suits for any injuries or deaths from any cause occasioned by the permittee's occupancy and use of the land included within the permit.

### **ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS & LIMITATIONS**

#### **EQUIPMENT AND TEMPORARY STRUCTURES**

**The permittee must supply their own chairs, risers, microphones, speakers, sound system, etc. No equipment will be available for use.** All sound amplification equipment must be kept at a level so as not to disturb visitors in the immediate area or in the vicinity of the amphitheater. No structure of any kind may be erected without prior approval of the Superintendent. Examples include tents, shade canopies, and/or a stage.

#### **SMOKING**

Smoking is prohibited in the amphitheater.

### **VEHICLE ACCESS**

Vehicle access to the amphitheater is allowed to drop off and pick up people with limited mobility. Equipment may also be dropped off and picked up. No vehicles are allowed to park behind the amphitheater during the special event. All vehicles are subject to screening.

### **HELIUM BALLOONS**

Outdoor release of helium-filled balloons within the National Park System is prohibited. These balloons inevitably fall back to earth where they create hazardous conditions for marine wildlife and also create additional litter problems.

### **CLEANING UP AFTER THE EVENT**

The permittee is expected to leave the amphitheater in the same condition as it was found. All litter and equipment will be removed from the amphitheater immediately after the special event ends.

### **FEES CHARGED BY PERMITTEE**

A permittee, while on memorial property, may not collect admission or any other money associated with a special event. All permittee monetary transactions must take place outside the Mount Rushmore National Memorial boundary.

### **ALTERNATIVE LOCATIONS IN THE AREA**

Mount Rushmore's amphitheater is not a commercial concert venue. Groups may want to consider alternative locations within the Black Hills area to perform.

In addition to specific terms and conditions articulated in the permit, all other Federal laws and regulations apply.

These guidelines and fees are subject to change without notice. For additional information, please contact the Park Permits Office at 605-574-3125.