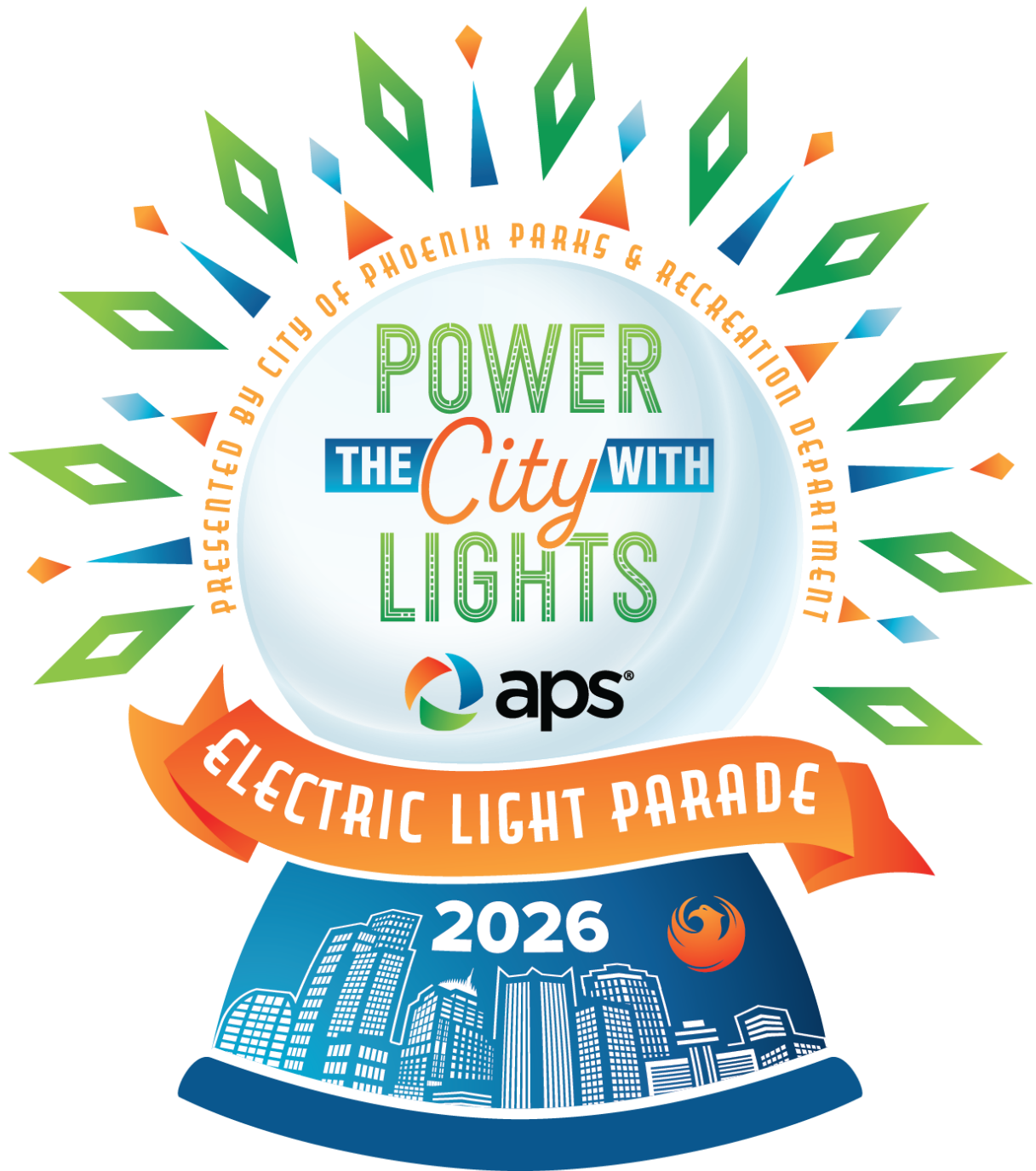


# 2026 APS ELECTRIC LIGHT PARADE GUIDELINES, SAFETY & OPERATION DETAILS



# CONTENTS

|                                                              |    |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| DEFINITIONS .....                                            | 3  |
| WELCOME .....                                                | 4  |
| GUIDELINES .....                                             | 5  |
| LIGHTING GUIDELINES .....                                    | 5  |
| FLOAT GUIDELINES .....                                       | 5  |
| DRIVER GUIDELINES.....                                       | 7  |
| FLOAT RIDER GUIDELINES .....                                 | 8  |
| SAFETY .....                                                 | 9  |
| PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS & SAFETY GUIDELINES.....          | 9  |
| EVENT SAFETY .....                                           | 10 |
| ENTRY INSPECTION .....                                       | 10 |
| WEATHER PREPAREDNESS .....                                   | 12 |
| ENTRY BASICS & OPERATIONS .....                              | 13 |
| PARADE PARTICIPATION BASICS .....                            | 13 |
| POWERING YOUR LIGHTS AND OTHER TIPS .....                    | 13 |
| PARADE OPERATIONS- ON THE PARADE ROUTE.....                  | 14 |
| ENTRY MARSHALL & ENTRY SPOTTER INSTRUCTIONS .....            | 15 |
| NORTH PHOENIX BAPTIST CHURCH (NPBC) – STAGING SITE HOST..... | 16 |
| ENTRY STAGING .....                                          | 17 |
| STAGING – FRIDAY NIGHT .....                                 | 18 |
| PARKING & SHUTTLES.....                                      | 19 |
| PARADE DESTAGING .....                                       | 19 |
| ABC15 - BROADCAST & LOCATION .....                           | 20 |
| PARADE TIPS .....                                            | 20 |
| KNOW BEFORE YOU GO – PARADE ATTENDEE TIPS.....               | 21 |
| PARADE GUIDELINES, SAFETY & OPERATIONS VIOLATIONS.....       | 22 |
| CONTACT INFORMATION.....                                     | 22 |
| IMPORTANT DATES & DEADLINES .....                            | 23 |
| DISCLAIMERS.....                                             | 24 |
| ATTACHMENTS.....                                             | 25 |

## I'm registered for the 2026 APS Electric Light Parade so now what?

Thank you for registering, we are excited that you've chosen to be a part of this year's event. The easy part is over and it's time to start to develop and implement a design for your entry. Carefully review all sections of this document as they address all things parade including lighting standards to safety requirements, to staging and destaging and everything in between. Understanding the information presented is essential for your positive experience, and for the safe development of an entry that will wow the crowd, promote your entry effectively and most importantly, ensures everyone is safe.

## DEFINITIONS

**Dangerous Weather:** is hazardous/dangerous and places excessive risks on infrastructure, those participating as entries and/or on those attending the event. Examples: high winds, hail, lightning, flooding.

**Destaging:** refers to the process of getting all entries off the parade route at 7<sup>th</sup> Street and Indian School and to their designated areas to shut down and prepare for getting the float home as well as to get the walking groups connected with their families.

**Entry:** an individual, group or organization registered and approved to participate in the parade.

**Entry Marshal:** individual that keeps their unit on the required pace as well as the first line of communication between parade organizers, PD and the entries. The entry marshal is also critically important to the safe operation of the entry, the public and other parade participants. (Required for all entries.)

**Entry Spacing:** space between each entry is approximately 55 feet (two white or yellow lines on the road).

**Entry Spotter:** individual (in addition to the Entry Marshal) required for all motorized entries with a trailer and/or walking participants. The safety spotter works with the float driver, and walkers to ensure safety throughout the route.

**Float:** Any powered or non-powered rolling vehicle, wagon, sled, performance platform, etc. utilized by an entry in the parade.

**Inclement Weather:** is less than ideal weather conditions (cold, rain or wind) which may cause an inconvenience but not a parade delay or cancellation.

**May.** Denotes an action that this standard recommends that a user consider, depending on how reasonable it is under the circumstances of a given event.

**Must.** Denotes a mandatory requirement.

**Parade.** A procession of people, often accompanied by floats, marching bands, or other sorts of entertainment.

**Parade Monitor:** Individual placed at designated intervals along the route to monitor and assist with parade pace, breakdowns, questions and safety. Parade monitors are in constant radio contact with safety personnel and other parade monitors along the route.

**Parade Pace:** forward progress 60-75 steps per minute with the line of march.

**Parade Pause:** parade managers institute a hard stop to ensure entries are keeping pace and no large gaps are created. Once a hard stop is lifted, all entries continue forward and the pace and spacing required.

**Should.** Denotes a recommendation, as opposed to a requirement that one must fulfil.

**Staging:** refers to getting all parade entries placed in a pre-assigned space at North Phoenix Baptist Church parking lot which allows for an organized and systematic approach to moving all entries onto the parade route.

**Staging Position:** numerical placement of an entry in the parade staging line-up.

**Starting Line Manager:** Individual that stops all entries before the parade starting line, provides last minute communications, and releases the entry onto the parade route.

**Unit:** each motorized or towed vehicle, animal, performance group or similar object that travels the route together to represent a common organization or cause.

## WELCOME

On behalf of our entire team, we are thrilled to welcome you to the Parade!

We encourage you to bring your vibrancy, creativity, and pride to your entry to amplify the show-stopping, festive energy we are creating. Be thoughtful and make your entry engaging to showcase your brand or organization with gusto!

Finally, be sure to share your participation and invite your friends to the Parade.

# GUIDELINES

## LIGHTING GUIDELINES

The APS Electric Light Parade is a night-time parade; all entries MUST focus on developing an entry that has high visual interest through the use of lights.

1. Only Underwriter Laboratory (UL) approved wiring, lights and batteries may be used (meets nationally recognized standards for safety).
2. Everyone, whether walking or riding, and their accessories must be illuminated. Glow products may be substituted for lights.
3. Handheld accessories: headpieces, instruments, etc., must be outlined or accented with lights or glow products. The route is over two miles...it's advisable to limit the weight on each uniform/instrument by using appropriate lighting systems.
4. For optimum effect, it is suggested that lights be placed as close together as possible but no more than one to two inches apart (Light reflectors are suggested for better illumination).
5. The use of spotlights and/or interior lit inflatables is okay if the remainder of the entry is lit.
6. All major construction points and lines should be outlined in lights to highlight the shape of the design element.
7. All vehicle headlights must completely covered or turn off while on the parade route.
8. Brake lights should not be covered and must remain visible.
9. There is no minimum number of lights required on a vehicle, float, or entry unit; however, units must be completely covered in lights (LED's, neon, glow products, etc.).

**MORE LIGHTS BRING MORE SMILES AND CHEERS**

## FLOAT GUIDELINES

It's critical that proper steps are taken while designing and building a float prior to its entry in the APS Electric Light Parade. The safety of the driver, passengers, marching participants and bystanders are all at risk if safety precautions aren't taken. During construction of your float, identify any hazards and plan your build to mitigate the issues. Below are guidelines and risk management practices to follow while preparing and operating your entry/float.

1. Entries cannot exceed 13 feet 6 inches in height due to overhead obstructions. Make sure nothing protrudes overhead that could make contact with wires, signs, banners, or other objects on the parade route.
2. There is no limit on length of a float entry as long as it can successfully maneuver the staging area and route; there are two 90-degree turn angles required to access the route from the staging area and two additional 90 degree turns on the route (Central Avenue and Camelback and 7<sup>th</sup> Street and Camelback Road).
3. If an entry is wider than 10 feet pre-approval is required from APS Electric Light Parade

Coordinator.

4. All decorative material must be flame retardant and clear of the float's exhaust system.
5. Portable generators must be secured to the float and away from flammable materials in a well-ventilated area. If refueling might be necessary, placing the generator at an easily accessible location is essential.
6. All vehicles and tow vehicles MUST carry a current dated 2A10BC fire extinguisher.
7. All vehicles and tow vehicles must have a fully functioning horn, brakes and brake lights.
8. Ensure the float driver has a wide, unobstructed 180° field of view.
9. Verify the float attachment and the tow hitch are the correct size/form for a secure connection that stabilizes the float behind the tow vehicle when in motion.
10. Ensure safety chains are in place between the tow vehicle and the float.
11. Float beds must be secured to the trailer frame, and capable of carrying the weight of the riders and equipment.
12. Each entry lead must ensure their float vehicle has been inspected and is safe for use. This includes but is not limited to proper service for gasoline, water, oil, brakes, tires and battery.
13. Ensure proper clearance of decorative materials from around the wheels of the vehicles to avoid any materials dragging on the ground or being caught in the wheels.
14. Portable generators must be used according to manufacturer specs. Do not allow the heated exhaust to come in contact with the parade float/materials.
15. Do not overload electrical wiring.
16. Secure extension cords properly; do not let them drag on the ground, contact tires or the drivetrain.
17. Inspect all your electrical equipment before energizing the parade float.
18. All wires, cords, and equipment must be in good condition with no cuts, breaks, damage or exposed wires.
19. Re-fueling of generators will not be permitted while the entry is in motion.
20. Rider restraints, guardrails and safe rider fixtures must be included and functional for all riders.
21. Parade entry is solely responsible for obtaining permission for use or performance of any material copyrighted under state or federal law. Applicants must ensure that all necessary licenses or other permissions to use or perform copyrighted material, including performance of live or recorded copyrighted music, are obtained in advance of the special event.
22. Each entry must display their entry name directly in front of the entry or on both sides of a unit. This sign/name must be lit and must align with the name submitted for the commentary. Options may include, but are not limited to a banner, digital sign board, etc. Clear, easy to see and read signage not only promotes your entry, it also ensures the proper commentary is presented for the entry.
23. All entries are required to play theme or holiday music throughout the APS Electric Light Parade route. Entries must maintain a volume that will not interfere with other parade entries, or to be so loud that emergency auditory instructions or alerts cannot be heard by the driver and entry participants and does not violate City decibel requirements.
24. The use of the sound system for broadcasting messages is prohibited.
25. If spare fuel is necessary, the container MUST meet the Portable Fuel Container Safety Act of 2020 which requires portable gasoline containers to conform to ASTM F2517.

# DRIVER GUIDELINES

Selecting the correct driver is extremely important. The driver is a critical component to the safety of your entry, entries in front of and behind yours as well as the public. Entry lead is responsible for ensuring the following guidelines are met.

1. Entries must select an experienced and responsible driver that is healthy and rested for the parade.
2. Entry lead must ensure their driver has a very good driving record/history.
3. All drivers must possess and be prepared to show their valid motor vehicle operator's license (for the class of vehicle they are driving in the parade).
4. Drivers must be adequately trained to drive their entry.
5. Each driver of a motorized entry is required to sign the safety acknowledgement form as a requirement of passing the entry inspection process. The driver safety acknowledgment form will be provided when the commentary document is distributed. The document includes responsibilities such as...
  - Verification that the vehicle was inspected and safe.
  - Understand rules and expectations of driver including:
    - maintain visibility
    - slow speed
    - no drinking, drugs or medication allowed prior (minimum 12 hours) to or during the parade
    - no smoking
    - no distracted driving
    - follow instructions from walking marshal, parade route marshals, entry spotter and Phoenix PD
    - breakdowns process
    - has reviewed and understands the parade route and where turns are located
6. Every person driving an entry must attend driver orientation.
7. Drivers should maintain a speed of no more than walking speed (no faster than 3 MPH) when the float is occupied.
8. Drivers must maintain a minimum space of 55 feet between the parade entry/floats in front of them to permit smooth and steady slowing/stopping.
9. At staging time (6:30 pm) the driver, entry marshal and entry spotters MUST remain in place at the entry in the event there are questions, problems or if the float needs to be moved.
10. Driver must have a clear field of view. The driver must have a wide field of view to avoid other floats and the crowd.
11. If an entry must back-up the parade float, the entry must have sufficient personnel/spotters to guide the float.
12. The use of cell phones is strictly prohibited while driving a vehicle on the parade route.
13. Driver must ensure there are no riders on the float once it leaves destaging to head home or back to the staging area.
14. Driver must be aware when turns are approaching on the parade route so speed can be reduced as those corners are typically where back-ups occur, and entry pace slows.

## FLOAT RIDER GUIDELINES

1. Float riders may not ride on the float during transport to and from the parade site.
2. Float riders may not mount or dismount the float or tow vehicle when it is in motion.
3. If children are riding on floats they must be supervised by an adult.
4. Rider seats must be secured to the float deck. For maximum protection, a guardrail barrier should be erected along the exposed sides and ends of platforms to prevent float riders from falling out of the float.
5. Float riders must remain in safety belts/restraints and/or holding fixed hand-holds or other safety rails or barrier rails while the unit is moving.
6. Float riders must NOT throw anything including but not limited to candy, beads, toys, shirts, etc. to spectators or squirt them with silly string, liquid or other novelties.
7. Float riders must know the location of the fire extinguisher, how to operate it, and how to shut off the generator and other electrical equipment.
8. Once in destaging, float riders must exit the float prior to the float exiting the destaging area onto the regular roadways.
9. Riders must not stand, jump, dance or dangle any body part over the edge of their float when it is in motion.
10. Passengers riding in pick-up truck beds must be seated fully within the confines of the truck bed. These passengers may not stand or straddle the truck bed when the vehicle is in motion.
11. For convertibles, passengers must be seated (no standing) on the top of the back seat. Rear seat belts must be engaged/secured so riders can wedge/hook their feet.
12. Any float with riders or articles hanging over the edge of the float is subject to immediate removal from the parade.

# SAFETY

## PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS & SAFETY GUIDELINES

1. No unregistered entries or entries that have failed to pass inspection are permitted on the parade route.
2. All children (17 and under) riding a bicycle or other wheeled device as part of an entry, must wear proper safety equipment including a helmet at all times.
3. Parks and Recreation Department producers must receive proof of vehicular insurance by October 30, 2026, for any vehicle being driven on the route.
4. All parade unit operators must participate in the mandatory Entry Driver's Orientation in the North Phoenix Baptist Church chapel building on Friday, December 4, 2026, at 5 pm.
5. Each driver of a motorized entry must sign the Operator Safety Acknowledgement form as a requirement of the entry inspection process (see attached form).
6. Children under the age of 8 are permitted to ride on or in a parade unit provided all regulatory seat belt and car seat laws are followed.
7. Children under the age of eight (8) may not walk in the parade.
8. No strollers carrying youngsters are allowed.
9. Religious expression is permitted, but proselytizing on the parade route is prohibited.
10. Equestrian or other animal entries may be approved to participate but approval to do so must be obtained prior to registration.
  - a. Equestrian or other animal entries must ensure all animals are healthy, behave well in crowded places, and do not react negatively to loud noise.
  - b. All animals must be attended in staging, on the route and in destaging.
  - c. Animal entries must clean and remove waste in the staging area, along the parade route, and in the destaging area.
  - d. All animal waste must be packed out or disposed of safely and appropriately.
  - e. Clean-up details will be required in the entry form.
  - f. Rider or individual in control of the animal must be at least 18 years of age.
  - g. Any animal deemed unsafe, uncontrolled or displaying an unstable disposition will be removed from the parade.
11. All entries must provide their own entry marshal to lead and manage their entry as well as an entry spotter when required (instructions are provided in these guidelines).
12. Entries that have both motorized units and walkers must provide at least one additional walker (entry spotter) to ensure safe space between vehicles and pedestrians.
13. All entries must be able to travel at a speed of one to two miles per hour for the entire parade route (just over 2 miles). The official parade pace is 60-75 steps per minute.
14. The use of unlicensed character likenesses as part of an entry is prohibited.
15. North Phoenix Baptist Church, and the parade route are smoke and alcohol-free areas. Consumption is a violation of AZ State law (4244.20). Smoking or the consumption of alcohol by any individual will result in immediate removal from the event.
16. Failure to obey APS Electric Light Parade officials or law enforcement by a participant or their parents will result in that entry being removed from the APS Electric Light Parade as well as

forfeiture of any award and prize.

17. Unless you are registered as a commercial entry, you must cover all commercial logos/name.
18. **Parade participants are strictly prohibited from throwing, tossing, or launching any objects into the crowd. This will prevent an unsuspecting spectator from getting hit by a flying object, being injured in a scrum as attendees attempt to retrieve the items, and will reduce the likelihood of any spectators, especially children, from entering the parade route to retrieve an object.**
19. Walkers, as part of your entry, may hand items to the crowd along the parade route (prior approval required).
20. The chaperone ratio for walking groups is not less than one (1) adult for every fifteen (15) children. Chaperones must dress in all black or unit uniforms to avoid distracting from the parade entry.
21. Inappropriate, unsafe participation, failure to follow instructions or other violations of parade guidelines can result in denied participation for individual and/or organizations in future parades.
22. By completing the registration process, the entry contact person acknowledges that all walking participants are 8 years old and older.
23. There is no demonstration of support for or against any candidate(s), parties, political organizations, propositions, measures, etc. by entries.

## EVENT SAFETY

**Parade safety is critically important; parade organizers have worked timelessly to ensure operations and entries have all the information necessary to participate safely. The City of Phoenix emergency management staff continue to evaluate and provide all support necessary.**

1. **In the event of an emergency, Phoenix Public Safety officials have management control of the parade and will provide parade management and entries with instructions.**
2. **Be aware of your surroundings and report suspicious activity. If you see suspicious behavior or situations, do not confront the individuals involved. Find a police officer or parade staff member.**
3. **Medical staff and vehicles are available along the route. Contact a parade monitor, police officer, or other emergency staff if there is an issue or emergency.**
4. **Do not leave backpacks, bags, boxes, or equipment in the staging area or on the streets. Be aware of any suspicious items left in the street.**

## ENTRY INSPECTION

All entries will be inspected by the Phoenix Police Department to ensure adequate and safe float and lighting before the APS Electric Light Parade. Inspections begin at approximately 5 pm on Friday and 3 pm on Saturday. Entries that fail to pass the initial inspection should have time to fix the issue if they get their inspection done early enough. If the issue cannot be resolved, entry will be removed from the

APS Electric Light Parade. The following items are part of the inspection.

1. Entry confirmation that all critical systems (steering, cooling, breaks, tires, etc.) on the entry vehicle have been inspected and are in safe working order.
2. Anyone riding on a float (standing, laying, sitting, etc.) must be attached to the float by a seatbelt-type strap or belt with quick release mechanism of sufficient strength to hold a person in motion. Entries cannot be tied in- no use of ropes or knots is permitted; participants must be able to escape, on their own, in an emergency.
3. The driver must have an unobstructed view of the road to the front and to the side unless in radio contact with a guide.
4. The driver must have access to a functional exit; vehicle must be escapable.
5. The driver seat must be securely mounted to the frame.
6. The driver must have adequate ventilation to bring in outside air.
7. There can be no generators inside the vehicle where there is a driver compartment or rider.
8. A minimum of one 2A10BC-type fire extinguisher must be provided on each entry or unit. If an individual is in an enclosed entry, there should be one extinguisher inside and within reach of the driver and another extinguisher outside. The fire extinguisher must have a current State Fire Marshal certification tag indicating that the extinguisher has been serviced within the last year. The gauge must indicate that the extinguisher has pressure. Do not obstruct the extinguisher with decorative material to hide its location.
9. Batteries must be secured with no loose connections.
10. Fuel tanks must be secured and there may not be any leaks.
11. Spare fuel must be stored in a UL or ASTM approved container.
12. Spare fuel must be secured and stored away from any heat source, but not inside the cab or enclosed in the tow vehicle.
13. All wiring must be properly secured to prevent mechanical damage and injury to float riders.
14. All connections must be UL approved.
15. Portable generators or compressors used on the float must be securely mounted on a vehicle or other substantial base. A minimum of 12 inches clearance must separate any part of the generator/compressor from combustible fabrication material.
16. Portable generators may not be secured or braced in an enclosed space with the driver or riders.
17. Exhaust pipe(s) must be wrapped with fire retardant tape if it passes through the float's skirt/decoration, and it should extend at least 6" beyond the rear of skirt.
18. Depending on placement, generators/compressors must be equipped with firmly attached exhaust systems that adequately redirect exhaust from the driver and riders.
19. Generator exhaust system must not be in contact with anything combustible.
20. All entry materials must be flame retardant.
21. Open flames, fire and flammable props are prohibited.
22. The steering must work properly (up to a 1/4 turn is ok).
23. Castors or wheels must be securely attached and in good condition (i.e. no cracks in wheels)
24. Entry must have access to radiator cap to add water (hatch or opening); must have extra water for radiator.
25. The entry may not contain sharp or jagged metal or boards that could cause injury to the driver, rider or spectator.
26. For self-propelled floats, tow bar(s) must be secured and remain with the float at all times in case of breakdown.
27. Draw bars must be secured.

*\*\*\*Depending on what your entry is, a number of these inspection items may not apply.*

## WEATHER PREPAREDNESS

Phoenix weather will be monitored in real time. The parade is a rain or shine event so entries must be prepared for all circumstances. Dangerous weather, however, could result in the elimination of entries, a parade delay/postponement or result in the cancelation of the event.

1. Participants must design and build their entry knowing there is a chance for inclement weather for the event (example- waterproof electrical connections).
2. The presence of inclement weather, like rain, does not change the pace of the parade but entries must be aware that people will instinctively walk faster or slower depending on their condition, when facing inclement weather. It is important to maintain the prescribed pace as noted in these guidelines.
3. Dangerous weather will affect entries (examples include, but are not limited to tall entries, entries with large props, and helium balloons) as well as parade infrastructure (signs, portable restrooms, broadcast area, etc.) which may result in the elimination of entries or other operational items.
4. Entries must be aware that if dangerous weather moves in, crowd movement and entry movement down the route will be affected. Crowds may attempt to cross the route or narrow the route as they attempt to return to the safety of their vehicle, homes or businesses. Drivers, Entry Marshalls and Entry Spotters must be ultra-aware and extra careful, and vigilant proceeding safely down the route.
5. For any entry on the route when inclement weather occurs, returning to staging is not an option so an entry can be safely parked on the route until the dangerous weather moves out or there is potentially up to 2 miles until the end of the route where destaging can occur.
6. Participants are encouraged to utilize weather apps as a resource but understand the information is more general and the apps can be slow to respond and update information.
7. Drivers must be aware that a high volume of rain could accumulate on the parade route or on the entry which makes stability and control of the entry more difficult.
8. Weather issues will be communicated to entries through the parade monitors and Phoenix Police Department officers along the route.

# ENTRY BASICS & OPERATIONS

## PARADE PARTICIPATION BASICS

1. The success of the annual APS Electric Light Parade is dependent on the amazing entries developed. With the event theme in mind, build your entry with quality materials and use more lights than you ever planned to.
2. All participants **MUST HAVE FUN!**
3. **The APS Electric Light Parade has ONLY ONE live Santa Claus; additional live Santa's are STRICTLY prohibited. Additionally, Mrs. Claus is staying home at the North Pole, so her live use is also strictly prohibited.**
4. For security reasons, the use of drones in the staging area, parade route and destaging are prohibited.
5. All entries are encouraged to include a lit banner prominently displaying their logo or name to lead their entry. Because holding a banner off the road for the entire route can become physically taxing, we recommend a banner no larger than 36 inches high so individuals carrying it can leave their arms extended rather than bent up. The sign width is less important but does affect the overall weight. Groups typically use a banner that is between 4 and 10 feet wide.
6. All entries are required to include their entry name or logo on both sides of their entry (lit) so those in attendance will know who you are. (Required on just 1 vehicle if there is more than 1.)
7. All first-time APS Electric Light Parade participants are encouraged to attend the 1<sup>st</sup> time entry meeting on October 21, 2026. Staff will explain the rules and answer any questions.
8. Entries must commit to staging by deadlines in this document which are earlier than the entry may think necessary to ensure the staging and destaging plans for the parade can be properly executed. Please see schedules noted within this guide.
9. Parade entries must be prepared to move forward onto the parade route at 6:45 pm. Groups must be prepared (bathroom runs completed, powered up, people in place, etc.) to begin movement to the route to ensure staging is tight and seamless.
10. All parade entries must be appropriate, tasteful, festive, promote the holiday spirit and the 2026 parade theme.

## POWERING YOUR LIGHTS AND OTHER TIPS

There are 5 common ways participants power themselves and their entries; many use a combination of these options.

1. *Portable gas-powered generators*: provide a simple way to light without complicated wiring. Any standard holiday lights, inflatables and decorations will easily plug in and run off this power source.
2. *Power stations*: these are rechargeable power banks that have the ability to run a lot of lights for a good period of time. They can be expensive and you have to have a back up plan if you are pushing the battery storage limits.

3. *Batteries*: easily power many battery-operated devices and novelties; unfortunately, batteries have a limited power source and wear down over time and they can become heavy.
4. *Inverters*: an inverter is a device that converts 12-volt DC current into 110-volt AC. This device easily connects to a cigarette lighter, generator, car battery or electrical source. Inverters are inexpensive but each model has a power limit so the inverter must match the capacity of the wattage needed to operate your lights.
5. *Novelties*: Primarily used by walking and performing entries, glow sticks, necklaces, and so much more are available through quite a few vendors. Glow products best serve to enhance your lighting because it takes a lot of them to make a statement and meet the lighting guidelines.
6. LED lights are amazing; they are bright, they draw very little power, and you can generally string a lot of them together.
7. Net lights work great for large areas of the float; net lights easily zip tie together to create full area coverage.
8. You don't have to build it yourself; there are several vendors that rent holiday lights, equipment and props that you can use to make your entry special.
9. Accessing the parade route is a fine-tuned system where lot managers pull entries from 3 different staging lots into one line in numeric order. Because the entry staged in front of you in the lot may not be the entry in front of you on the parade route, because it is dark, it's noisy, there are huge crowds spilling into the staging area and staging area exit areas, getting onto Central Avenue can feel quite chaotic. This process is the first challenge the entry and Entry Marshall will need to conquer. Entries must observe everything happening around them, listen carefully and execute the instructions from parade staff to safely enter the route. Please see the route access illustration in the attachment section.

**Entry groups or individuals that fail to meet the lighting requirements will be pulled from the APS Electric Light Parade.**

## **PARADE OPERATIONS- ON THE PARADE ROUTE**

1. To keep the APS Electric Light Parade moving smoothly, entries **MUST** maintain a line of march and **MUST NOT** stop for pictures or performances **EXCEPT** at the ABC15 broadcast site where ABC15 staff will regulate your time there. For the remainder of the parade, entries must keep pace with the entries in front of them.
2. Parade units may not reverse course.
3. Motorized entries and floats must remain in the center of the parade route (entry **MAY NOT** travel from route edge to route edge to engage with spectators or perform stunts). These activities raise safety issues and are likely to cause gaps between entries that detract from spectators' experience.
4. If you suffer a breakdown during the parade, move the vehicle to the right side and allow the entries behind you to pass. If you can get your entry restarted, you may proceed down the route at the position you occupy once you are moving.
5. Parade spacing between each entry is approximately 55 feet (two white or yellow lines on the road). Entry must maintain that spacing throughout the parade.

6. Entries may NOT exit the parade route once the parade has begun.
7. If there is an issue with your entry, find a way to get it over to the right as far as possible to get out of the way so other entries can continue past you.
8. A very quick stop is ok and required if a generator needs additional fuel. Your Entry Marshall must inform the parade monitors what's going on when a stop is necessary. The entry must close whatever gap is created between the unit in front of them as quickly but safely as possible.
9. If an entry vehicle breaks down on the parade route; it must be removed immediately following the conclusion of the parade to ensure uninhibited route clean-up and our ability to reopen roads in a timely manner. At least 1 person must stay with the broken-down entry. Entry is responsible for removal fees.
10. Indian School Road & 7th Street is the end of the APS Electric Light Parade; all entries are required to proceed to their designated de-staging area immediately. There is no stopping in the intersection, but all music should cease, and lighting should be shut down as soon as possible without negatively impacting the forward motion of the other units entering destaging. (Because 7<sup>th</sup> Street from Indian School to Osborn is for destaging only, shutting things off promptly helps prevent crowds from setting up there to see the parade.
11. Inappropriate, unsafe participation, failure to follow instructions or other violations of the event rules or guidelines will result in loss of awards/prizes as well as other penalties as outlined in this document.

## **ENTRY MARSHALL & ENTRY SPOTTER INSTRUCTIONS**

Entry Marshals (EM) and Entry Spotters (ES) are critical to the success of the parade because their role is to ensure the safety of their entry/participants. The role of each is described in detail below.

1. All entries are required to provide a person to serve as the entry marshal; if an entry does not have an entry marshal the night of the APS Electric Light Parade, that unit or group will be removed.
2. The EM has many important roles including continuously monitoring the area in front of their entry, to keep their entry moving at the required pace which eliminates parade gaps, to facilitate the progress and safety of the parade, and to serve as the primary line of communication between parade staff, Phoenix PD and the entry.
3. EM must have the ability to listen, follow instructions and communicate issues to the parade monitors along the route.
4. EM must be able to provide instruction/direction to their entry. If your entry suffers a breakdown during the parade, move the entry to the right side and communicate with and allow the entries behind you to pass. EM must notify the closest parade monitor of the breakdown (parade monitors wear yellow vests and can be found on the parade monitor map (provided at the mandatory entry meeting)).
5. The EM must pay attention to the road ahead and if they observe debris or a trip hazard, attempt to remove it safely. If unable to address the issue, the EM should alert the next Parade Monitor they pass.
6. The EM is responsible for carrying the entry position number which is utilized at the sound area and the broadcast area.

7. The EM must walk with the entry (stationed approximately 5 to 8 feet in front of the entry but not in the path of the entry on the passenger side) to lead the entry. The EM must remain close enough to share important information quickly.
8. The EM must be prepared to stop at the parade Starting Line Manager where they will receive final information and reminders. Once that communication occurs, the Starting Line Manager will release entries onto the parade route at the appropriate entry spacing gaps.
9. EM and ES must be at least 18 years of age.
10. An entry number is issued to the EM at the event information table approximately 2 hours before the start of the parade.
11. EM must carry the entry position number for entry identification to ensure the number is visible as the entry approaches the judges table, and ABC15 broadcast area. Staff at the broadcast area will collect the number and from that point forward, the role of the marshal continues, as described in this section.
12. All motorized entries with both a vehicle and walkers is required to have at least one additional person walking with the entry to serve as the Entry Spotter.
13. The ES works with the entry driver, and walkers to ensure safety throughout the route.
14. The ES to ensure the safety of the entry walkers by continuously monitoring the walkers and ongoing communication with the vehicle driver.
15. The ES should be stationed on the drivers side of the vehicle and can move forward and backward between the driver and the trailer or entry walkers.
16. The ES must always be ready to react and to have a method to alert the driver of emergencies, the need to stop an entry and deal with issues on the route or instructions provided by Phoenix PD and parade route monitors stations down the route.
17. EM must be dressed in black as to not stand out or distract from the entry.
18. The EM and ES must attend the entry driver mandatory meeting held Friday, December 5<sup>th</sup> at 5 pm in the chapel building.
19. See EM/ES placement diagram in the attachments.

## **NORTH PHOENIX BAPTIST CHURCH (NPBC) – STAGING SITE HOST**

North Phoenix Baptist Church is our parade staging site host; as such, there are expectations set forth in our staging agreement which all entries are required to abide by.

1. There is a noise ordinance with a 75-decibel limit.
2. All amplified sound must be off by 10 pm.
3. The NPBC campus is smoke free / alcohol free.
4. There is no outside vending, soliciting or fundraising on campus.
5. Parking lots are secured, and no vehicles or equipment may be left overnight Saturday, December 5, 2026, following the conclusion of the parade.
6. There is no fundraising or donation collection permitted.

## ENTRY STAGING

What is parade staging? Staging refers to the process of getting all parade entries assembled and placed in a pre-assigned spot at North Phoenix Baptist Church parking lot which allows for an organized and systematic approach to moving all participants onto the parade route. Entry staging begins Friday, December 4<sup>th</sup> from 10 am until 5 pm and continues Saturday, December 5<sup>th</sup> from 10 am to 4 pm.

1. Staging information, event updates, maps, parking passes, etc. are distributed at the mandatory entry meeting held at Steele Indian School Park- Memorial Hall (300 East Indian School Road). Staging packets are available beginning at 5 pm and the meeting will begin at 6 pm on December 1, 2026.
2. The staging area is broken into 4 zones which includes the information center, walking entry zone, motorized entry zone and a sponsor entry zone (see diagram in attachments).
3. Entries must enter the staging lot at the North Phoenix Baptist Church north entry-gate, which is located on Bethany Home Road, just east of Central Avenue. It is easier and safer to enter from the west, so entry does not have to cross in front of eastbound traffic.
4. **The staging areas are very busy and congested with floats; to keep pedestrians safe, ONLY entry vehicles (those registered and traveling down the route) are permitted in the staging lots. There are NO personal support vehicles permitted inside the staging areas. Entries must plan accordingly so they are prepared to manually transport supplies and equipment from designated parking spaces to their entry position in the staging lot.**
5. Entry numbers will be posted on traffic cones in the staging areas. Please stage your entry (drivers' side front bumper up to the cone at the staging number assigned to you. Parade production staff will be in the staging areas to assist you.
6. Entries must remain aware of staging position/alignment to allow effective staging access for the other entries.
7. For Friday staging, there are no parking passes required.
8. For parade night (Saturday, December 5<sup>th</sup>), entries receive up to 4 parking passes for parking at North Phoenix Baptist Church.
9. For parade night (Saturday, December 5<sup>th</sup>), a limited number of entry parking passes are available for destaging (the end of the route) in Steele Indian School Park. Destaging passes make it easy for parade participants to easily meet up in a designated area and to leave once they reach the end of the route parade. Destaging passes are distributed at the mandatory entry meeting on Tuesday, December 1<sup>st</sup>. Entries are not required to utilize the passes at the park and can develop their own meet up location around the destaging area.
10. Street restrictions and street closures begin early Saturday and continue and increase as the parade gets closer to start time- it's critically important for groups to be in place at the staging site early. (Getting in place early is especially important to groups that arrive by bus; the earlier it is, the fewer road restrictions and closures drivers will face getting to the bus destaging area.)
11. Entry staging position placement in the parade is made by Parks and Recreation Department staff; entries with a specific request related to their parade placement must submit the request in writing to include the special need and/or reason for the request; all requests for special

arrangements are considered however, there is no guarantee of acceptance. Requests are due by Friday, October 30, 2026.

12. All entries will be inspected to ensure adequate and safe float and lighting before the APS Electric Light Parade. Inspections begin at about 5 pm on Friday and 3 pm on Saturday. Entry groups or individuals that fail to pass inspection will be pulled from the APS Electric Light Parade.
13. Staging support vehicles left in North Phoenix Baptist Church (NPBC) lot once the parade starts must be retrieved as soon as possible following the parade as lot and grounds clean-up begins immediately following the final entry departure onto the route.
14. Following the parade, the staging and destaging parking lots are secured- NPBC (midnight) and Steele Indian School Park (11 pm) so vehicles MUST be removed prior to lock-up.
15. Trash...pick it up and pack it out. Entries must ensure all trash created by their entry while in the staging or destaging areas is disposed of properly (designated trash receptacle or packed out).
16. Portable restrooms are available in the staging area, along the parade route and at the entrance to the destaging parking area at Steele Indian School Park.
17. The North Phoenix Baptist Church campus map is located in the attachments.

## **STAGING – FRIDAY NIGHT**

We highly encourage all entries participating in the APS Electric Light Parade to be a part of early staging and judging which takes place on Friday night. The Friday night judging has become a Phoenix tradition for families as they come out to see and appreciate the creativity of the entries; they love and want to see your entry up close. Friday night remains very important for each entry; traveling to the staging area proves your entry's street worthiness and provides the driver with an opportunity to check sightlines and vehicle control. Just as important, participation offers an opportunity to power up the generator(s) to verify how long they will run on the tank of gas (the parade power demands on the generator will be different than how it performs for your personal use on a weekend camping trip, for example). Running the equipment Friday night will allow you to determine if and how much spare fuel you'll need to have for the actual parade. Finally, staging on Friday gives entries time to address and solve any problems that develop whether it's a bad string of lights or something that failed in the inspection. Other notes:

1. Most entries remain parked on site in their staging position overnight.
2. Security is on site all night to keep your entries safe.
3. Entries must remain aware of staging position/alignment to allow effective staging access for the other entries.
4. Parade staging areas (see staging map in the attachments) are restricted, however, the remaining church parking is open to the public and use and availability is first come first served- there are no entry parking passes for Friday night.
5. All entry work must be completed by 9 pm as no individuals are permitted on site after that.
6. North Phoenix Baptist Church has sole vending rights to the campus.
7. Pro-tip: As the staging area fills, it gets harder to get in so come early, make a day of it.

## PARKING & SHUTTLES

1. On parade day, there is dedicated pass parking for participants in the staging and destaging areas. Parking passes are distributed to each entry at the mandatory entry meeting on December 1<sup>st</sup>.
2. We aim to provide the number of parking passes that you request, but due to the capacity of the lots available, a limited number are provided for all entries. You may request additional parking passes, and the parade operations lead will make the final determination on the final number of parking passes that you receive. Since space is limited in these lots, please make every effort to carpool.
3. Parking in the designated lots is not required. Entries do not have to park / destage in Steele Indian School Park, it is only an option. Many long-time entries have identified parking lots around the destaging area and have used them for years which you are welcome to do as well.
4. On parade night, the road restrictions, closures and massive crowds make travel near the parade route difficult so it's very important to work out your parking and shuttle plans well before.
5. Because it's so difficult to get back to the top of the parade route/staging area the best way to avoid long delays is to park at the in the destaging lot or destaging area which allows you quick and easy access to the vehicle. All egress at the end of the parade route moves south and out of the restricted and congested area.
6. Parking at the end of the route allows the parade participants to go straight to their vehicle to head home so they don't have to make their way back to the top of the route to retrieve their vehicles.
7. The staging area and destaging parking passes do not give holders special access to restricted areas, streets, the parade route or staging area.

Event organizers do not provide shuttles for the event. Shuttling between staging and destaging is fully the responsibility of each entry.

## PARADE DESTAGING

What is destaging? Destaging refers to the process of getting all entries off the parade route at 7<sup>th</sup> Street and Indian School Road and to their designated areas to shut down and prepare for getting the entry home as well as to get the walking groups connected with their families. In general, motorized entries (trailered and non-trailered) are sent south of Indian School Road on seventh street which is closed all the way down to Osborn. Walking entries are sent west on Indian School Road to Steele Indian School Park. Groups that utilize busses to get to/from the event also travel west on Indian School Road to their busses that are staged on Indian School Road between Central Avenue and 3<sup>rd</sup> Street.

1. All entries are required to follow destaging instructions and guidelines outlined throughout the participation documents and entry meetings.
2. Destaging information, event updates, maps, parking passes, etc. are distributed at the mandatory entry meeting held at Steele Indian School Park (300 East Indian School Road) on December 1, 2026.

3. A limited number of passes are available, so we encourage car-pooling to the site.
4. Effective destaging is reliant on effective staging; groups, especially those arriving by bus, **MUST** adhere to established timeline and be staged early to ensure the buses can get down to the destaging zone prior to street closures.
5. If an entry has a special destaging need that does not fit the aforementioned model, they must make the request with the destaging lead before the end of the entry meeting. The destaging lead will determine if and how destaging modifications will be made.
6. If no modification has been approved, entry must proceed as the destaging model states.

## **ABC15 - BROADCAST & LOCATION**

The ABC15 broadcast location is on central avenue, on the right (west) side of the street. The production team uses a variety of camera's including a drone to get video of your entry from a number of angles.

1. There will be ABC15 production staff and Parade Marshals at the broadcast area that will stop entries to ensure they are in place for the proper video taping.
2. It's time to shine; entry members should wave, smile big, and look towards the cameras and the broadcast emcees.
3. Once ABC15 production staff has the video needed, the spotters will release the entry to continue down the parade route. This is the **ONLY** spot on the parade route entries should stop.
4. Although the parade is recorded by ABC 15 to be televised later, the footage is edited due to broadcast time constraints which means there is no guarantee that an entry will be shown as part of the broadcast. The Facebook live feed generally contains the entire parade.

## **PARADE TIPS**

To help ensure a positive experience, you will find a few tips from the long-time ELP parade pros below.

1. The parade goes on rain or shine so dress and prepare for the weather.
2. Place as many vehicles at the bottom of the route as possible because it is very difficult to get back up to the church staging area after the parade.
3. Keep a "supply" vehicle at the church staging area. Because staging is required hours before the parade, the supply vehicle provides a place to keep snacks, food, drinks, chairs, etc for the entries as they wait for the parade.
4. It's a long route, utilize your float to carry water or other hydrating liquids for the walkers.
5. Keep the route map with portable restroom locations handy so you know where to go if there is an emergency.
6. Because parade staging clean-up begins the minute all entries are on the route, do not leave anything behind that you expect to find after the parade.

7. If you plan to drive your entry back to the staging lot after the parade do not use the church parking lot to tear down your entry or leave debris behind in the staging lot because cleaning crews have already completed the area and are moving down the parade route.
8. Top off generator fuel just before proceeding onto the parade route.

## KNOW BEFORE YOU GO – PARADE ATTENDEE TIPS

1. Crowds for this event have grown large in recent years and spectators start arriving many hours early to reserve a spot. Viewing spots along the parade route are first-come, first-served.
2. There is a very large crowd (especially children) so be kind and respectful of other attendees, local homeowners, and businesses around the parade route.
3. There are many portable restrooms along the route; scope out the location near you before you need to find one.
4. The start and end points of the parade are very busy; finding a great location in the middle of the route where there are less people will improve your event experience.
5. It's very dark once the streetlights go off so stay behind the route cones on the route and NEVER run out into the parade.
6. Parking is available on city streets around the parade route and is on a first-come, first-served basis. Private lots near the parade area often offer parking for a fee
7. Utilize mass transit to and from the parade route; consider taking Valley Metro Light Rail to avoid traffic congestion.
8. Even though it may be a cool evening, it is important to stay hydrated.
9. The parade is a rain or shine event. Check and monitor the weather forecast.
10. Dress for the weather; the temperature drops significantly once the sun goes down.
11. Bring blankets and chairs for seating.
12. Families make a night of it by bringing food, drinks, and snacks. Coolers are permitted, but alcohol and glass containers are prohibited.
13. Spectators should try to minimize and gather any trash and litter generated during the parade to ease post-event cleanup.
14. Set up early and go explore a great variety of stores, eateries and boutiques in the uptown area.
15. Follow the instructions of parade staff, parade monitors and the public safety staff around and along the parade route.
16. Respect the parade route; to ensure the safety of parade entries and attendees, remain behind all cones and barricades to ensure a safe route for the entries is maintained down the route.
17. Don't leave items behind (chairs, tents, etc.); everything left is considered trash and disposed of.
18. We invite parade sponsors, entries, and spectators to join us on social media platforms; follow, like share and tag us. Additionally, we would like spectators to share posts with one another using the hashtag **#PHXLightParade**.

## PARADE GUIDELINES, SAFETY & OPERATIONS VIOLATIONS

ELP guidelines, safety, and operations expectations provided in this document must be adhered to from the time staging begins until the parade has ended and the entry has exited the destaging area.

There are multiple levels of consequences for actions that violate any of the standards put forth in the parade documents. The discipline steps are meant to be progressive, but the number and/or severity may result in more serious consequences on the progressive scale. Please note, anything done that is illegal also comes with the consequence associated with the violation under the appropriate city code. The violation consequences are noted below.

1. Warning
  - a. A warning can be provided verbally during the event or can be a written warning following the event.
2. Removal
  - a. A serious violation can result in the immediate removal from the event space / event participation.
  - b. Removal includes the revocation of any entry category award and prize received
3. Written Violation
  - a. All serious infractions will result in a written notice following the event.
4. Suspension
  - a. A suspension results in the individual or organization registration being rejected for a minimum of 1 year, to a maximum of 3 years.
5. Ban
  - a. A ban is an indefinite suspension of the individual or organization from participation in all future parades.

### \*\* Probation

- a. Every infraction comes with an automatic assessment of probation. The probation period can range from a minimum of 1 year, to a maximum of 3 years.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

Event Email: [ELP@phoenix.gov](mailto:ELP@phoenix.gov)

Entry Liaison: Marcus McGuire / [marcus.mcguire@phoenix.gov](mailto:marcus.mcguire@phoenix.gov)

Destaging Lead: Martin Gonzales / [martin.gonzales@phoenix.gov](mailto:martin.gonzales@phoenix.gov)

Parade Lead: Bob Berlin / [bob.berlin@phoenix.gov](mailto:bob.berlin@phoenix.gov)

Northeast Division Office: 602-262-6696

## IMPORTANT DATES & DEADLINES

| IMPORTANT DATES                                                                  | DETAILS                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| September 8, 2026 – October 16, 2026                                             | Parade entry registration period.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| October 21, 2026<br>(6-7:30 pm)                                                  | <b>First-time entry workshop</b><br>This is an informational meeting for first time participants interested in an in-depth look at the entry guidelines, the entry inspection process, as well as some decorating tips. Return entries are welcome to attend to discuss updates to the APS Electric Light Parade and to share ideas and insight with newcomers. The workshop will be held at Devonshire Senior Center, 2802 E. Devonshire (1 block N. of Indian School Rd. on 28th St.). |
| October 30, 2026                                                                 | Commentary form, proof of vehicle insurance, and special placement consideration request due                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| December 1, 2026<br>(5 pm - doors open for packets<br>6-7:30 pm – entry meeting) | <b>Entry Meeting</b><br>This is a <b>MANDATORY</b> meeting for all entry representatives and walking marshals to review the staging and de-staging plans, receive the APS Electric Light Parade line-up and any last-minute changes and announcements, as well as to pick up parade packets and parking passes. The meeting is held at Steele Indian School Park (Memorial Hall), 300 East Indian School Road.                                                                           |
| December 4, 2026                                                                 | <b>Entry check-in &amp; staging</b><br>Entry check-in & staging (10 am-5 pm). Entries can arrive, check in and stage their entry at the designated location in the North Phoenix Baptist Church parking lot at Central Avenue & Bethany Home Road.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|                                                                                  | <b>Driver, Entry Marshal &amp; Entry Spotter meeting (5:00 pm)</b><br>This is a <b>MANDATORY</b> meeting conducted by the Phoenix Police Department for all float or towing unit drivers to cover specific regulations. The meeting is held in the chapel at North Phoenix Baptist Church, 5757 N. Central Avenue.                                                                                                                                                                       |
|                                                                                  | <b>Entry judging (5:30-8 pm)</b><br>All float entries must be on site at North Phoenix Baptist Church, 5757 N. Central Avenue, and ready (lit) by 5:30 pm to be judged.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| December 5, 2026                                                                 | <b>Entry check-in &amp; staging (10 am-4 pm)</b><br>Entries can arrive, check in and stage their entry at the designated location in the North Phoenix Baptist Church parking lot at Central Avenue & Bethany Home Road.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|                                                                                  | <b>Parade Go Time</b><br>Entries should be lit up and ready to go by 6:40 pm. The staging manager will begin to move entries into formation at 6:50 pm.<br><b>APS Electric Light Parade begins PROMPTLY at 7 pm.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |

## DISCLAIMERS

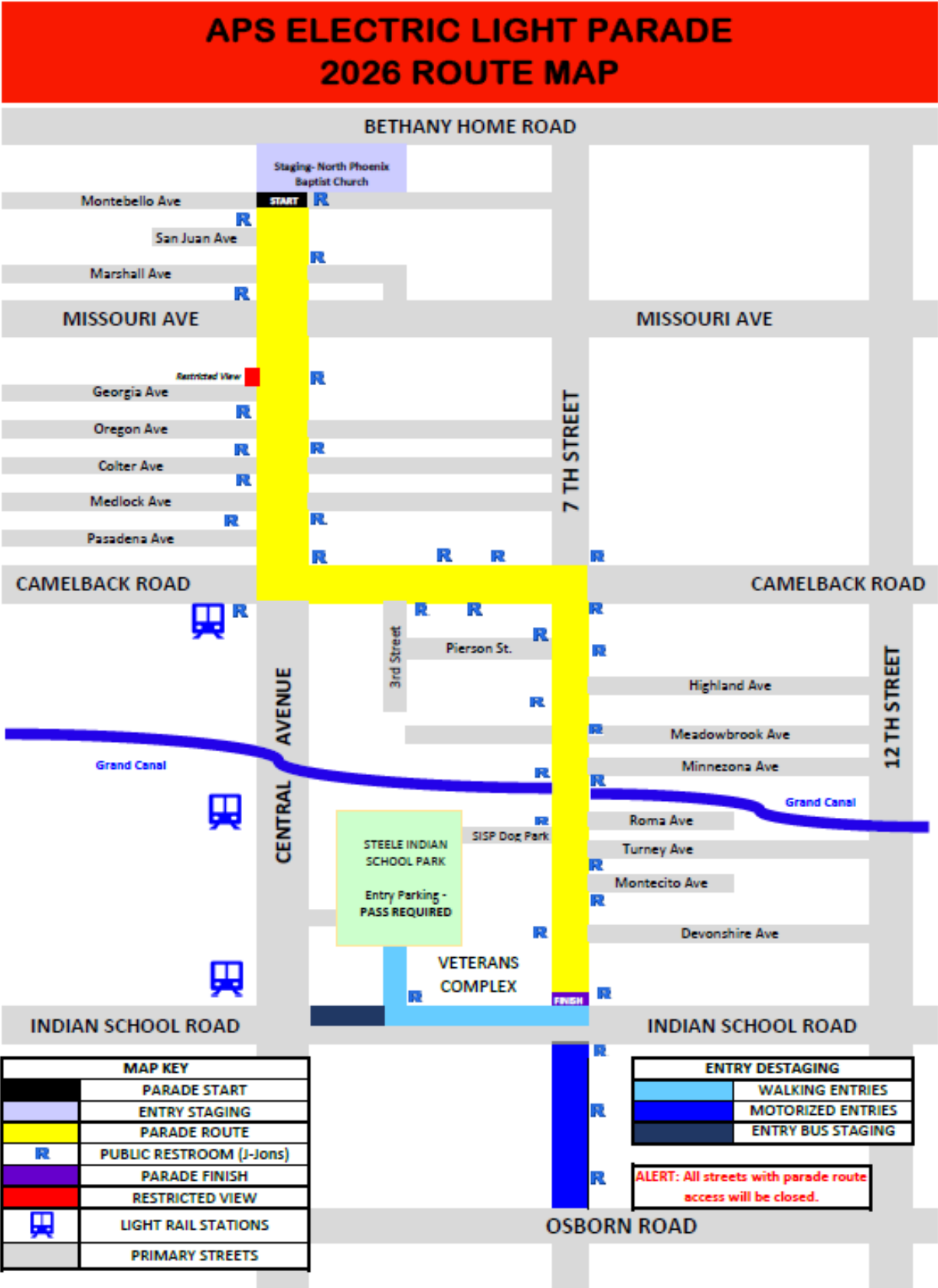
For Parks and Recreation:

This publication can be provided in an alternate format upon request. Call 602-262-6862 (voice) or 602-262-6713 (TTY). 602-534-3787 (FAX).

E-mail: [receptionist.PKS@phoenix.gov](mailto:receptionist.PKS@phoenix.gov)

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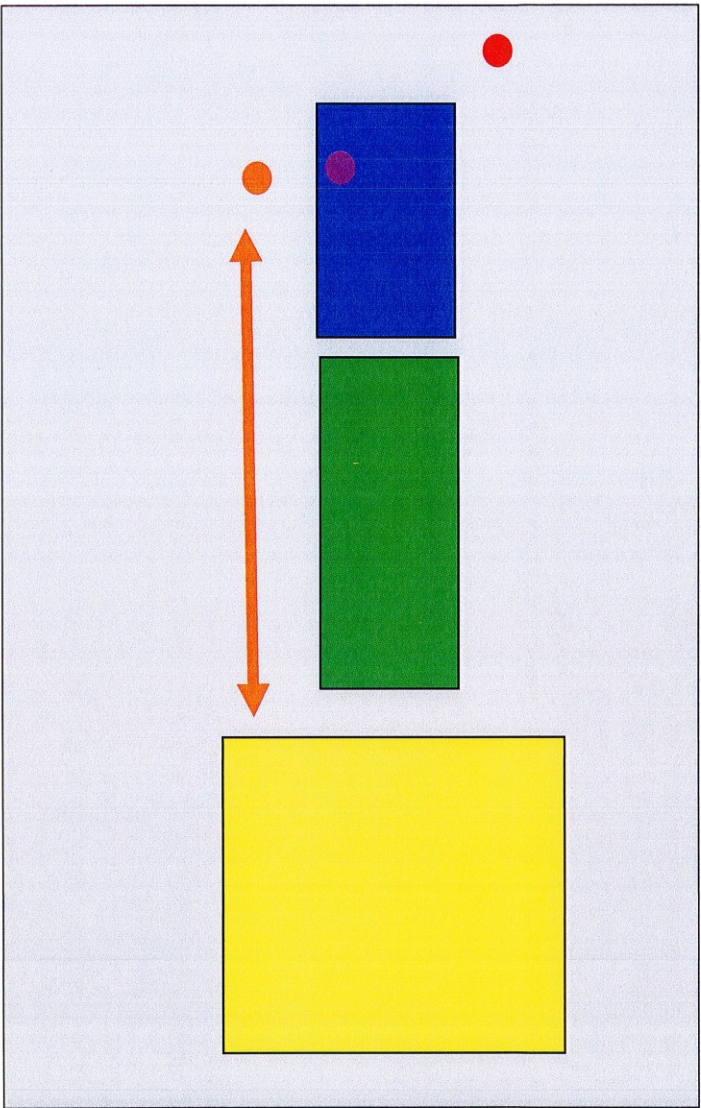


**North Phoenix Baptist Church Campus Map (parade entry staging location)**



A detailed placement map as well as destaging information, event updates, maps, parking passes, etc. are distributed at the mandatory entry meeting held at Steele Indian School Park- Memorial Hall (300 East Indian School Road) on November 28, 2023.

Entry Walker and Entry Spotter Placement



| KEY           |       |
|---------------|-------|
| Road          |       |
| Tow Vehicle   |       |
| Driver        |       |
| Float         |       |
| Entry Marshal |       |
| Entry Spotter | range |
| Walkers       |       |

## HOW DOES STAGING WORK?



Each entry is assigned a staging number which is used for placement position within the staging lot zones as well as their position in the parade.

Staging is broken into 3 zones; Zone 1 has the sponsor and dignitary entries, Zone 2 has the walking entries, and Zone 3 is for the motorized entries.

At 6:45 pm, we begin to move entries from the staging lots onto the parade route, so we are prepared to start the parade at 7 pm sharp. Zone/lot managers pull entries from each zone, in numerical order, to stage onto Central Avenue as they prepare to enter the parade route. There are additional zone staff that support the Lot Manager and will communicate with entries to keep them moving toward the zone exit release point (yellow arrow).