



# SYRACUSE FIRE DEPARTMENT

CITY OF SYRACUSE, MAYOR BEN WALSH

## PORTABLE OUTDOOR GAS-FIRED HEATING APPLIANCES (PATIO HEATERS)

### Purpose

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The intent of this policy is to provide the minimum guidelines for the use of outdoor gas-fired heating appliances (patio heaters) and establishment of general safety requirements for the storage and use of such heaters.

### Scope

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This policy applies to the use of outdoor gas-fired heating appliances, also called patio heaters, being utilized in outdoor areas of restaurants, sidewalk cafes, hotel dining areas, outdoor smoking areas and retail sites. The use of these appliances are subject to the following conditions.

### References

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2020 Fire Code of NYS [FC]  
Property Conservation Code of the City of Syracuse (PCCCS)

### Operational Permit

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A separate propane permit is required for ***each*** heating appliance.

- The product manual for the appliance must be provided with each permit application. Permit applications will not be accepted without the product manual for the appliance.
- Permits are valid from January 1 to December 31.
- Permits must be posted in a conspicuous place and provided upon request of the Chief of Fire or his designee.
- A minimum of one (1) portable fire extinguisher with a 4-ABC rating shall be available for immediate utilization. The extinguisher must be located in the vicinity of the appliance, not inside the building.

**Michael J. Monds**  
Chief of Fire

**Daniel Downes**  
First Deputy Chief

#### Deputy Chiefs

Robert Cussen  
Elton Davis  
Barry Lasky  
John Kane  
James Farewell

Fire Prevention Bureau  
Syracuse Fire Dept.  
201 E Washington St.  
Suite 200  
Syracuse, N.Y. 13202

Office 315 448 4777  
Fax 315 448 4779

[SFDsprinkler@syrgov.net](mailto:SFDsprinkler@syrgov.net)

[FirePrevention@syrgov.net](mailto:FirePrevention@syrgov.net)

[www.syrgov.net](http://www.syrgov.net)

## Prohibited Locations and Clearances

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The approved appliance may **not** be placed or located:

- Inside any occupancy when connected to the fuel gas container
- Inside tents, canopies, or membrane structures
- On exterior balconies
- On any combustible surface (decks, porches, tables, etc.)
- Less than 5 feet from any building or per manufacturer's instructions, whichever is greater
- Beneath or closer than 5 feet to combustible decorations, overhangs, awnings, sunshades or similar combustible attachments to a building or per manufacturer's instructions, whichever is greater
- Within 5 feet of exits or exit discharge or per manufacturer's instructions, whichever is greater
- Less than 5 feet from a Fire Department Connection hydrant

## Installation and Operation

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- Only listed and approved portable outdoor gas fired heating appliance, utilizing a fuel gas container that is integral to the appliance, shall be used.
  - a. **Natural gas shall not be used as the fuel source**
  - b. **Outdoor electric heaters require pre-approval from a city Electrical Inspector**
- Appliances must be installed and maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
- **Appliance shall be equipped with a tilt or tip over switch that automatically shuts off the flow of gas if the appliance is tilted more than 15 degrees.**
- The heating element or combustion chamber of the unit must be permanently guarded so as to prevent accidental contact by persons or materials.

### **Fuel gas containers and Refill operations:**

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- Only approved fuel gas containers shall be used.
- The maximum individual capacity of any gas container used in connection with the appliance shall not exceed 20 pounds.
- Indoor storage of gas containers prohibited.
- Replacement of fuel gas containers shall not be conducted while the public is present. The appliance being serviced must be moved to a nonpublic area or the area in which it is being used must be cleared of patrons while the container exchange is in progress.

### **Extinguishment Authority.**

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Where a gas-fired heating appliance (patio heater) creates or adds to a hazardous situation, causes property damage, personal injury, is deemed a nuisance or a required permit for the appliance has not been obtained, the Chief of Fire, or his designee is authorized to order the operation of said appliance to cease until such condition has been rectified.

If you have any questions regarding this or any other fire safety concerns, contact the Syracuse Fire Department – Fire Prevention Bureau at 315-448-4777 or [FirePrevention@syr.gov.net](mailto:FirePrevention@syr.gov)

Syracuse Fire Department  
Fire Prevention Bureau  
September 2020

