

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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How to Safely Use Portable Outdoor Heaters

With more outdoor dining in place in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, it's important that everyone knows the proper uses of portable outdoor heaters.

Portable outdoor gas-fired heating appliances are allowed as an exception to NC Fire Code that prohibits such uses if the heater is:

- at least 5 feet from any building;
- at least 5 feet from combustibles, including overhangs, awnings, sunshades, or something similar;
- at least 5 feet from an exit and exit path to the sidewalk;
- not in any walking path;
- not located inside a building where connected to the fuel gas container;
- not inside tents, canopies, and membrane structures;
- not on exterior balconies;
- regularly checked and maintained; and
- in compliance with sections 603.4.2.2 and 603.4.2.3 of the state fire code codes.iccsafe.org/content/NCFC2018/chapter-6-building-services-and-systems#NCFC2018_Pt03_Ch06_Sec603.4.2.

For questions about the use of portable outdoor gas-fired heating appliances, contact the Chapel Hill Fire Department Life Safety Division: 919-968-2781.

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