



Oceanside Fire Department

300 N. Coast Highway
Oceanside, CA 92054
760-435-4101

Standard 1-2008

Barbeques on Balconies, Patios and Decks of Multiple Unit Residences

These requirements apply to the use and storage of barbeques on balconies, patios and decks of residential structures having more than two dwelling units (i.e. apartments, condominiums and townhouses other than townhouses located on individual parcels separated by recorded property lines).

A. Fire Code Requirements

Charcoal burners and other open-flame cooking devices shall not be operated on combustible balconies or within ten (10) feet of combustible construction. *[Exceptions: 1. single- and two-family dwellings; and 2. where buildings, balconies and decks are protected by an automatic sprinkler system.]* CFC 308.3.1

Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) burners having an LPG container with a water capacity greater than two and one-half (2.5) pounds (i.e., nominal 1 pound LPG capacity) shall not be located on combustible balconies or within ten (10) feet of combustible construction. *[Exception: single- and two-family dwellings.]* CFC 308.3.1.1

B. Summary of Code Requirements

Open-Flame Cooking Devices: It is not acceptable to operate a charcoal barbeque unit on a combustible (e.g., wood) balcony or within 10 feet of combustible construction, including the surrounding walls and overhang. It is acceptable to operate such a barbeque on a balcony if the balcony, deck, overhang and adjacent walls are of non-combustible construction or if the balcony is protected overhead by an automatic fire sprinkler system. It is okay to store a charcoal barbeque unit on a combustible balcony.

LPG Fueled Cooking Devices: It is not acceptable to store or operate an LPG barbeque with a propane fuel container size greater than 1 pound on a combustible balcony or with 10 feet of combustible construction, including the surrounding walls and overhang. There is no exception for automatic fire sprinklers.

C. Frequently Asked Questions

When did these new requirements become effective?

January 1, 2008

Can electric barbeques be used on combustible balconies and decks without restriction?

Yes

With what size of propane tanks are barbeques normally equipped?

Most barbeques are designed to operate using standard 20-pound (5 gallon) cylinders.

Are natural gas fueled barbeques subject to the same regulations as LPG fueled units?



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No. However, they are still subject to the regulations of CFC Section 308.3.1 for open flame cooking devices (see Section A, above). Note that a permit is required to plumb and connect natural gas to a barbeque.

Can I convert my LPG barbeque to use natural gas?

Yes, if done in accordance with the barbeque device manufacturer's specifications. You must obtain a permit from your local Building Department prior to adding or making any changes to existing natural gas piping systems.

What types of materials are considered combustible construction and what types are considered non-combustible construction?

Wood or vinyl siding, wood decking and fabric awnings are examples of combustible construction. For the purpose of these regulations, stucco covered walls/ceilings, concrete or tiled floors and wood railings facing the exterior (not between units) are considered to be non-combustible construction. Note that certain composite deck and railing materials may also be considered non-combustible for the purpose of these regulations. Check with your local Fire Department for approval.

Can I store my charcoal barbeque on my combustible balcony as long as I no longer use it?

Yes, but you should first check with your building manager/owner since the property may have more restrictive rules regarding barbeques.

Can I store my LPG barbeque on my combustible balcony as long as I no longer use it?

Yes, but only if the fuel tank is removed. However, you should first check with your building manager/owner since the property may have more restrictive rules regarding barbeques. Note that the removed fuel tank cannot be stored on the balcony within 10 feet of combustible construction or inside any enclosed structure. *[Note: Tanks cannot be stored on the inside of a dwelling unit.]*

Can I connect (manifold) multiple small camp stove-size LPG containers to use in place of a larger LPG tank to fuel my barbeque?

No.

Are there other restrictions I should be aware of regarding the use of propane fuel?

Yes. If your building has more than one dwelling unit above the first floor, you must transport the LPG/propane containers to your unit via an open exterior stairway. It is not acceptable to transport propane containers greater than one-pound capacity inside the common building areas (i.e. enclosed interior stairway and elevators).

Whom do I call if I want to report someone using their barbeque in non-compliance with these regulations?

Call your building manager/owner to report the incident.

If I install a fire sprinkler on my balcony, can I use a barbeque?

No. The entire building – not just the balcony area – requires a fire sprinkler system.