



ONTARIO TECH

BULLETIN FOR PROPANE HEATERS ON CAMPUS

Proper use of propane heaters and open-flame appliances helps ensure safe and enjoyable outdoor events, especially in colder months. Follow this **essential safety bulletin information** to prevent risks such as **fire hazards** and **carbon monoxide poisoning** when operating or storing propane heaters.

DO:

- Place heaters on a **stable, level surface** to prevent tipping.
- Ensure **fire extinguishers** are available and easily accessible near the patio area.
- **Never block exits** — position heaters away **from exit paths**, including fire escapes.
- Confirm **indoor smoke and carbon monoxide detectors** are functioning properly.
- Follow the **manufacturer's installation instructions**, including:
 - Required **ceiling clearance**
 - Safe **distance from combustibles**, building openings, or mechanical air intakes
- Use **free-standing heaters with anti-tilt features**.
- Ensure staff are trained in **safe heater operation**, including:
 - Proper **propane cylinder installation/disconnection**
 - **Leak detection** and **emergency procedures**
- **Carry propane cylinders upright**, with the valve on top.
- Handle cylinders carefully to avoid **impact or dropping**.

DON'T:

- Use propane heaters **indoors or inside enclosed spaces** (e.g., tents).
- **Store propane cylinders indoors** or near active heaters/smoking areas.
- Set up heaters on **grass, uneven surfaces, or near platform edges**.
- Move heaters while the flame is lit.
 - Always **shut off the propane**, allow the unit to cool, and then move.
- Transport cylinders in **enclosed vehicles** without ventilation.
 - Use a **vented truck bed, propped open trunk, or open windows**.
- Leave heaters **unattended**, especially near **children or impaired individuals**.

General Safety Information:

- **Combustible materials** (e.g., umbrellas, paper decorations, tent walls, awnings) must be kept **away from heating units**, including above and below.
- If storing heaters indoors (for security), **remove the propane cylinder first**.
 - Store cylinders **upright in a locked, tamper-proof, and vehicle-proof area** (e.g., secure cage or fenced enclosure).
- **Check for leaks** after installing fuel cylinders:
 - Use a 50/50 **water and dish soap** solution on all connections.
 - **Bubbles = possible gas leak** → tighten and retest.



- If the leak persists, contact a **TSSA-certified technician** immediately.
- **Disconnect propane cylinders and cap all outlets** when not in use.

Filling Propane Cylinders Regulations:

- Only **trained personnel** may refill propane cylinders.
- All refillable cylinders must be filled to **no more than 80% capacity**.
- **Do not attempt to refill non-refillable (single-trip') cylinders.**
 - These are not built to handle pressure from refilling and pose a safety risk.

Safety 101: What to Do if You Smell Propane

1. **FLAMES OUT** – Extinguish all flames and avoid sparks, cigarettes, and electronics.
2. **PEOPLE OUT** – Evacuate the area immediately and stay out until cleared by professionals.
3. **PROPANE OFF** – If safe, shut off the main supply valve on your propane tank.
4. **CALL IN** –
 - Call Fire Services for emergencies or suspected gas leaks.
 - Contact your propane supplier for refueling or non-urgent concerns.
5. **CHECK UP** – Do not use the heater or system until a qualified inspector approves it.

If you have any inquiries regarding this document, please contact the Office of Risk Management at orm@ontariotechu.ca.