



ONTARIO TECH

GUIDELINES FOR PROPANE HEATERS ON CAMPUS

Knowing how to use patio heaters and open-flame appliances safely will help everyone enjoy outdoor events well into the fall and winter season — while avoiding the dangers of **carbon monoxide poisoning and fire**. Make sure everyone has a safe and enjoyable outdoor experience by following these important safety rules when using your outdoor propane heaters or storing portable propane cylinders.

Do:


- Ensure heaters are on a **stable surface** so they don't get knocked over.
- Be sure to locate sufficient, easily accessible, fire extinguishers in the patio area.
- **Position** patio heaters next to or in the path of an exit, including fire escapes.
- Confirm smoke and carbon monoxide detectors located inside buildings are working properly.
- Install heaters according to the **manufacturers' instructions** regarding ceiling height clearance and proper distancing from any fire hazards, building openings or mechanical air intakes.
- Make sure all free-standing units have an anti-tilt feature.
- Establish that **all staff** are familiarized with the safe operation of patio heaters.
 - Propane cylinder installation, disconnection and leak detection as well as emergency procedures
- Always carry the cylinder in an **upright position** with the **safety valve on top**.
 - Use caution when moving propane cylinders to avoid dropping or impact.

Don't:

- Use them indoors or **within an enclosed structure** such as a tent.
- Store Propane cylinders **indoors**. Do not store them near operational heaters or smoking areas.
- Install heaters on **grass or an uneven sidewalk**, or near the edge of an elevated platform.
- Move portable heaters while the flame is lit.
 - Make sure the propane supply is properly shut off and the unit cool before relocating.
- Do not **transport cylinders in an enclosed space**.
 - Open windows, a propped open trunk, or a ventilated truck box are safe ways to transport a cylinder.
- Leave patio heaters **unattended**.
 - Additional caution should be used when children or inebriated adults are in the vicinity.

General Guidelines:

- **Fire hazards** can be located around, above or underneath heating units and can include combustible materials such as umbrellas, awnings, tent walls, tablecloths, paper products, decorations, etc.
- If you need to store your patio heater indoors for security reasons, **remove** the propane cylinder first.

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- They must be **stored upright** and safeguarded with tamper-proof, vehicle-proof protection, such as a locked cage or fenced-in area.
 - When installing fuel cylinders, **always test for leaks** by applying a 50/50 solution of water and dish soap to all propane cylinder connections and hoses.
 - If bubbles appear, gas **may be leaking**. Tighten the connection and retest.
 - If bubbles reappear, contact a TSSA-certified technician to repair or replace damaged parts.
 - **Disconnect** cylinders and plug or cap all outlets before you go.

Filling Propane Cylinders Regulations:

- Refilling any cylinder must be done by trained personnel. **Never** attempt to refill cylinders by yourself.
- All propane cylinders are designed to be filled to a **maximum 80% capacity** for safety reasons, which is not possible with refill kits.
- Cylinders known as a 'single trip' or 'non-refillable' cylinder cannot be refilled
 - Refilling nonrefillable cylinders is a **safety risk** as they are not designed to handle the refilling pressure.

Safety 101

Any time you smell propane, here are five simple safety tips to follow:

1. **FLAMES OUT** – cigarettes, fires, sparks or electronic devices.
2. **PEOPLE OUT** – get everyone out of the building and don't go back in until experts say it is safe.
3. **PROPANE OFF** – if it is safe to do so, shut off the main propane supply valve on your propane tank.
4. **CALL IN** – call fire services for any emergency, including gas leaks or suspected hazards.
 - call propane retailer for non-emergencies: refueling, installation, or safe handling instructions
5. **CHECK UP** – don't try to use your propane tank or appliances until a qualified inspector has checked out your entire system.

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