



DEPARTMENT OF FIRE SERVICES
Fire Marshals Office (203) 341-5020
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Nathaniel Gibbons, Fire Marshal

Auxiliary Heating In Outdoor Activity Tents

Propane Open-Element Heaters

Free-standing propane-fueled heaters with an exposed heating element (“mushroom” heaters”) are prohibited inside tents, covered patios, and structures. These heaters may be used adjacent to an umbrella-covered dining table as long as clearance is maintained between the heater and any combustible objects.

Fuel-gas Fired Radiant Heaters

Radiant heaters with enclosed combustion chambers are permitted only when installed to the present fire and building codes. Any tank-style fuel storage must be outside the tent and separated from building openings as required by the fire code.

Fuel-gas Fired Hot Air Furnaces

Hot air furnaces are permitted when the furnace and fuel supply are completely outside the tent, with hot air ducted into the tent enclosure. Any tank-style fuel storage must be outside the tent and separated from building openings as required by the fire code.

Electric Radiant Heaters

Electric radiant heaters are permitted inside tents when installed according to the manufacturer’s instructions, and with adequate clearance from combustibles. See details below on electrical requirements.

Electric Infrared Heaters

Electric infrared heaters are permitted inside tents when installed according to the manufacturer’s instructions, and with adequate clearance from combustibles. See details below on electrical requirements.

Electrical Requirements

Temporary power for electric heaters shall meet all requirements of the National Electrical Code for weather resistance, GFCI protection, and grounding and bonding of all metal-frame tents.

House power circuits serving heaters using electricity shall be of adequate amperage.

Temporary electrical cords serving heaters shall be secured to the ground and covered to prevent tripping hazards.

Permits & Inspections

All temporary heater installations shall be inspected by the Fire Marshal's Office prior to tent use or occupancy.

Any permanent equipment installation shall require a building permit and inspection by the building department.

Lighting

Means of egress from tents/covered patios shall be lighted when its dark. Primary illumination shall be from regular powered circuits. Back-up illumination from battery or premises generator shall be present. Illumination levels shall be 1 foot candle at the walking surface.

Tents with More than 50% of Wall Space Down

Tents erected with more than 50% of wall space (tent flaps) down shall be considered as inside space. The permitted percentage of total occupancy (50% on 10/1/20) will include the tent's occupancy count. Tents erected under these conditions shall meet all requirements of Chapter 31 of the 2018 CSFSC and any applicable Connecticut State Building Codes.

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