



## USING OPEN FLAME COOKING DEVICES AT APARTMENTS BUILDINGS

This document is designed to provide guidance to those in our community who live in multi-family (apartment) buildings, and wish to cook over an open flame. Before cooking in this manner, there are some considerations:

### 2015 International Fire Code – Applicable

- Section 308: Open Flame Cooking Devices
  - o **Open-flame cooking devices.** Charcoal burners and other open-flame cooking devices shall not be operated on combustible balconies or within 10 feet (3048 mm) of combustible construction.

#### Exceptions:

- o One- and two-family *dwelling*s.
- o Where buildings, balconies and decks are protected by an *automatic sprinkler system*.
- o LP-gas cooking devices having LP-gas container with a water capacity not greater than 2-½ pounds [nominal 1 pound (0.454 kg) LP-gas capacity].

#### Hazards:

- **Open Flames**
  - o When cooking in this manner, food should never be left unsupervised, inside or out. Persons who cook in this manner should be prepared to address “flame ups”, and how to keep the fire from spreading. With normal cooking, using a properly fitting lid to cover a flaming pan is one of the safest practices when cooking. This may not be possible, depending upon the menu item and the cooking vessel
  - o Using your device too close to combustible construction can easily cause the fire to spread to the combustibles. “I turned away for only a minute” is added to many fire reports that document damage to homes.
- **Fuel Storage**
  - o LP-Gas: This product produces vapors that are heavier than air. This means that when released, it seeks the lowest level, and it will accumulate. When it finds an ignition source, it will ignite violently. The fire code does not allow the storage of this product in multi-family dwellings, and certainly not below grade. It also does not allow the transport of this product through this occupancy.

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## Hazards:

### - Fuel Storage (Continued)

- Lighter Fluid: This product produces vapors that are heavier than air. This means that when released, it seeks the lowest level, and it will accumulate. When it finds an ignition source, it will ignite violently. The fire code does not allow the storage of this product in multi-family dwellings, and certainly not below grade. It also does not allow the transport of this product through this occupancy.

## Suggestions

- Whenever cooking, constantly attended food almost never burns out of control.
- Keep a properly fitting lid handy. If a fire appears in the pan in which you are cooking, you can use the lid to smother the fire. If you're cooking on a grill and using aluminum foil, keep a lid handy. Covering flaming food will help to smother the flames and keep the fire from spreading.
- If you have a grill with more than one cooking level, move the food away from the flames until the flames are extinguished. Once they have been doused, move your food back to the lower area. Consider lowering the amount of heat needed to cook your food.
- Keep a fire extinguisher handy. Read the label on the fire extinguisher before you need it, so that you're familiar with its operation. The extinguishing agent will spoil your cooking and cause you to make other plans. Also, make sure the fire extinguisher is rated for the fuel you are using.
- **Never** use water on a grease fire – even outside. The fire will spread, and you may set nearby combustibles on fire. Or worse, you could be severely burned.
- When you're done cooking, turn the fuel supply off.
- Do NOT move the device indoors until it has cooled. Clean any liquid grease from the grill before moving, to avoid spills and unintended burns.

**ATTACHED TO THIS DOCUMENT ARE EXAMPLES OF COOKING DEVICES,  
ALLOWED BY CODE, AT MULTI-FAMILY / APARTMENT BUILDINGS IN TROY.**

Examples of Cooking Grilles which *are approved* for use at Multi-Family / Apartment complexes in Troy

LP – Gas (Propane)



*(Fuel Cells are 1lb or smaller)*

Electric



Examples of Cooking Grilles that  
*are NOT approved*  
for use at Multi-Family / Apartment complexes in  
Troy, when used within 10 feet of combustible  
construction



If your grill uses a fuel cell LARGER than the standard 1-lb LP-Gas cylinder, or, if it uses charcoal, *it is not approved* for use within 10 feet of combustible construction, or, on balconies of any apartment complex / multi-family dwelling in Troy.

It is a good idea to check with your property manager regarding the use of any of these types of devices at your location. Some complexes have rules that prohibit their use, even those allowed by local ordinance. Also, check with your insurance agent to ensure proper coverage in the event of an unintended fire.

If you have questions, please call our office, during business hours at 248-524-3419, and ask to speak with a fire inspector.