

The Cedar Rapids Fire Department's Fire Prevention Bureau prepared this brochure to help you understand the requirements for outdoor cooking grills in apartments and condominiums.

An oversized propane tank burned the apartment complex shown below



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OUTDOOR COOKING GRILL

*INFORMATION
FOR
APARTMENTS
AND
CONDOMINIUMS*



Fire Prevention Bureau

GRILL INFORMATION

A propane grill on an apartment balcony caused a large apartment fire in Cedar Rapids. This fire injured three people, caused over one-half million dollars of damage and displaced people from twenty dwellings. The Fire Code allows certain types of grills for legal use in and around apartments or condominiums.

What Is Allowed?

- Propane Grills with one-pound LP-Gas containers
- UL Listed Electric Grill
- Natural-Gas Grills installed by licensed mechanical contractors

Where Do I Find These Things?

Small propane grills which operate with one-pound LP-Gas cylinders are available at discount and hardware stores. You can store only two of these one-pound containers in each apartment or condo. A large propane grill can be fit with an adaptor sold by the propane dealer to handle the one-pound size containers. **DO NOT STORE YOUR 20 LB CONTAINER INSIDE ANY BUILDING** (except safely in a detached garage). LP-Gas dealers can take your 20 lb tank. Electric grills are also available at hardware and discount stores. Be sure to look for the U.L. label on electric grills. You'll have to talk to a contractor to have a natural-gas grill installed.

What's Allowed Only on the Ground Floor?

- Charcoal Grills per the following requirement:
- Propane Grills with LP-Gas Containers Bigger than one-pound per the following requirement:

REQUIREMENT: The propane grill and container need to be at least 20 feet from any building's multi-tenant, exit door (not the patio sliding glass door). You may use a charcoal grill on the ground floor **only if** it is on a non-combustible surface and not less than 10 feet from combustible construction. **DO NOT CARRY ASHES INTO OR THROUGH ANY BUILDING**

What's Not Allowed ABOVE the Ground Floor?

- Propane Grills with Containers Bigger than one-pound are NOT allowed.
- Charcoal Grills are NOT allowed.



It's very dangerous to carry large propane containers through a building, UP STEPS, or UP AN ELEVATOR to get it to a balcony. One twenty pound propane tank contains energy similar to six sticks of dynamite. Therefore, dropping a container or accidentally releasing this gas indoors is much more dangerous than doing so outdoors. Hot embers make charcoal grills dangerous. The coals may still be hot enough to cause a fire long after they appear to be out. Tenants often accidentally dump live embers into their trash receptacles, later causing a fire. Our department has responded to fires caused this way.

NOTE: If your balcony has approved exterior outdoor steps, which are not a required exit, then propane grills with 20 lb tanks may be used ONLY WHEN the 20 lb container is transported via the steps and NOT through the multi-family complex.

Why Not Single Family Homes?

Multi-family complexes carry more life safety hazards than single family dwellings. This is mostly due to the number of occupants. Most tenants don't know when or if their neighbors are home or out, have hearing aids in or not, or are asleep or awake. Therefore, when an emergency, such as a propane leak or fire occurs, it may have horrible impacts on the lives of **MANY** other people.

What Happens to People Who Ignore these Rules?

Notify your manager. If no action is taken, submit complaint to the manager or the fire department in writing. Managers are to notify tenants of the grill requirements. If tenants do not comply immediately with the fire code, then management should submit complaint to the fire department with documentation for fire code enforcement procedures. People who violate these rules violate the Cedar Rapids Fire Code, which is Chapter 37 of Cedar Rapids Municipal Code. **VIOLATORS MAY BE CITED and face FINES or other LEGAL ACTIONS.**

CITATION	
Iowa District Court In and For Linn County, Iowa	
1. Cedar Rapids Fire Code §308.3.1.....	\$
2. Cedar Rapids Fire Code §308.3.1.1.....	\$
Total.....	\$\$
The Defendant must appear in court no later than 8:30 A.M. on	
___/___/___ to answer this charge.	
Signature: _____	