



County of Fairfax, Virginia

To protect and enrich the quality of life for the people, neighborhoods and diverse communities of Fairfax County

DATE: June 5, 2009

TO: Building Owners, Property Managers, and Condominium/Homeowner Associations

FROM: Fairfax County Office of the Fire Marshal

SUBJECT: Open-flame Cooking & Outdoor Solid Fuel Burning Devices: *Code Changes*

Effective July 1, 2009, revisions to Chapter 62 (Fire Protection) of the Fairfax County Code amending the Virginia Statewide Fire Prevention Code (SFPC) will go into effect, changing a number of long-standing regulations regarding the use and storage of open-flame cooking devices. In addition, new regulations have been added to the Fire Prevention Code relating to the use and storage of outdoor solid fuel burning devices such as chimineas, fire pits, outdoor fireplaces, and other similar portable devices designed for outdoor use. These revisions were approved by the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors on Monday, April 27, 2009. The applicable Fire Prevention Code sections are provided below for ease of reference.

Outdoor Grills, Charcoal Burners & Open-flame Cooking Devices

308.3.1. Open-flame Cooking Devices. Charcoal burners and other open-flame cooking devices fueled by combustible or flammable gases, liquids, and solids shall not be operated or stored on a balcony or deck of any structure or within 15 feet of combustible construction or residential occupancy.

Exceptions:

1. Detached one- and two-family dwellings and townhouses.
2. Cooking devices using electricity as a heating source and listed by a recognized testing authority.

308.3.1.1. Notification of Tenants. The management of multi-family residential occupancies which have balconies, decks, or patios shall notify their tenants in writing of the prohibitions outlined in section 308.3.1 of this code when the tenant or occupant initially occupies the building and periodically thereafter as may be necessary to ensure compliance.

Outdoor Solid Fuel Burning Devices

308.7. Outdoor Solid Fuel Burning Devices. Chimineas, fire pits, outdoor fireplaces, and other similar portable devices designed for outdoor use shall not be operated or stored on a balcony or deck of any structure or within 15 feet of combustible construction or a residential occupancy.

Exception: Detached one- and two- family dwellings and townhouses.



Summary of Significant Changes

- Except for detached one- and two-family dwellings and townhouses, cooking devices fueled by natural gas are no longer permitted to be ignited or used on the balconies or decks of any structure or within 15 feet of combustible construction.
- Open-flame cooking device prohibitions apply to all buildings of combustible construction regardless of use group or occupancy classification.
- Only cooking devices using electricity as a heating source and listed by a recognized testing authority may be operated or stored on a balcony, deck, or patio of any structure or within 15 feet of combustible construction or multi-family residential occupancy.

For detailed information about fire prevention and safety requirements related to outdoor grills, charcoal burners, and open-flame cooking devices, go to the code compliance guideline “Open-Flame Cooking Devices” online at:

www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fr/prevention/fmpublications/fmbbq.htm

For detailed information about fire prevention and fire safety requirements related to outdoor solid burning devices such as chimineas, fire pits, outdoor fireplaces, and other similar portable devices designed for outdoor use, go to the code compliance guideline “Outdoor Solid Fuel Burning Devices” online at:

www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fr/prevention/fmpublications/fmfirepit.htm

If you have any questions or concerns about this advisory, please contact the Fire Inspections Branch at **703-246-4849**, Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Thank you for your attention to this important fire prevention and life safety issue.

Sincerely,

/s/

Deputy Chief Dereck A. Baker
Office of the Fire Marshal
Fairfax County Fire & Rescue Department

