



MIAMI VALLEY FIRE DISTRICT

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Open Flame Cooking Devices / Grills

Regulations governing the operation of open-flame cooking devices, such as barbeque grills, were presented in the 2011 Ohio Fire Code, which was adopted by the Ohio Department of Commerce, State Fire Marshal Division and went into effect on November 1, 2011. The Miami Valley Fire District adopted this code effective November 22, 2011.

The Miami Valley Fire District enforces the Ohio Fire Code, and over the years there have been many fires in multi-family structure. A multi-family structure is considered any residential property with more than two tenants or occupants.

The Ohio Fire Code

308.1.4 Open-flame cooking devices. Charcoal burners and other open-flame cooking devices "shall not be" operated on a combustible Balcony/Patio or within 10 feet (3048 mm) of combustible construction.

Exceptions:

1. One- and two-family dwellings.
2. Where buildings, Balcony/Patio and decks are protected by an automatic sprinkler system.
3. "Where approved by the fire code official", charcoal burners are allowed to be operated on combustible Balcony/Patio or within 10 feet (3048 mm) of combustible construction "where all of the following conditions are met":
 - 3.1 The charcoal burners are attended by an adult at all times when in operation.
 - 3.2 Portable fire extinguishers in the type, quantity and size as approved by the fire code official are present on the combustible Balcony/Patio or at the cooking site located within 10 feet (3048 mm) of combustible construction. Such portable fire extinguishers shall be in an operable condition at all times and maintained in accordance with NFPA 10 as listed in rule 1301:7-7-47 of the Administrative Code.

In our opinion these exceptions are not able to be maintained, therefore The Miami Valley Fire District "has not approved" the use of these devices on Balcony/Patio with the exception of Balcony/Patio that are fully sprinkled.

The best interests of the citizens of the Miami Valley Fire District and their safety is paramount in making this decision. One poor decision can have devastating effects to the other residents of that building whether they were aware of the risks or not.

Fire Marshal Q & A

Q: I understand the grill issue and I support it, can I take the propane tank off and store the tank inside or in my garage and just keep the grill on my Balcony/Patio?

A: No. While there is no fire code reference that states a grill without a propane tank can be stored on a balcony/patio, if it were to be allowed, a temptation would be presented to use the grill at some point in the hopes of not getting caught.

Another concerning factor is that it would not be acceptable in any fashion to store a potentially full propane cylinder anywhere inside a residential occupancy. A 20 lb. propane cylinder has the potential to level a building and has in the past.

The owner of the structure and/or complex is responsible for insuring that the requirements of the Ohio Fire Code are followed.

If you have further questions about using cooking devices on multi-family dwelling balconies, please call the Miami Valley Fire District at 937-560-2152.