



CITY OF  
SANTA ROSA

**Fire Department**

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**FIRE DEPARTMENT  
INFORMATION BULLETIN**

**SUBJECT: PROPANE USE IN OUTSIDE PUBLIC ASSEMBLIES**

**Bulletin Number: 020**  
**Date of Issue: December 9, 1999**  
**Revision Date: July 16, 2003**

**Code References:**

2001 California Fire Code (CFC) Article 25, Article 32, and Article 82, Standard 82-1  
Santa Rosa City Code 18-44

**NOTE:** This bulletin is a summary of Fire Department interpretations of City and State Codes. Information contained herein applies to typical instances and may not address all circumstances.

This standard is intended for those who desire to use propane for cooking, cooling, heating, lighting, etc., in special, public assembly events out-of-doors.

**PERMIT APPLICATION**

A permit to use propane at special events shall be obtained from the Fire Department. Permit fees are for a one-year period; however, a separate permit application is required for each individual event where the propane is used. Specific information regarding the type of operation to be conducted, as well as a site map, must be included with the application. Application forms are available at the Santa Rosa Fire Department, 955 Sonoma Avenue, Santa Rosa, CA, 95404. Use of a tent greater than 200 square feet or a canopy greater than 400 square feet requires an additional permit. Public Assembly permits for Special Events may also be required – check with the Fire Department for specific requirements.

**EQUIPMENT**

Propane storage tanks, regulators, piping, valves, fittings, burners, and associated equipment shall be approved for use as per the following standards:

- NFPA** - National Fire Protection Association
- DOT** - Department Of Transportation
- UL** - Underwriters Laboratory
- ANSI** - American National Standards Institute
- AGA** - American Gas Institute  
or other Nationally Recognized Standard

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**APPLICATION**

An application for propane use in outside public assemblies shall include the following:

1. Name, address and phone number of applicant, and name address and phone number of contact person if different from applicant.
2. Description of propane use: i.e., cooking (fryer, grill, etc.), heating, cooling, etc.
3. Site map, including the location of propane device(s) being used, location of extra cylinder storage, distance to adjacent buildings and any other propane being used at the same event.
4. Indicate date(s) and time(s) of use.
5. Total amount of propane needed for daily use (provide calculations indicating amount of gas per hour times the total hours per day).
6. Provide a description (drawing or picture) of device(s) used for event (manufacturer's specification sheets may be required).
7. Indicate type of enclosure, canopy or other booth assembly.

**APPROVED USE**

A special events propane permit will be issued upon completion of the application and when the following conditions for propane use are met:

1. Applicant will be permitted to use and store propane on site in the amount of five (5) gallons over that which is calculated for daily use, not to exceed a total of twenty (20) gallons and/or one hundred (100) lbs. of propane.
2. Propane containers shall not exceed five (5) gallons capacity; propane containers larger than five (5) gallon capacity may not be used for any outside public assembly events. Total containers shall not exceed twenty (20) gallons, and/or one hundred (100) pounds of propane.

EXAMPLE: A user calculates that he needs to use **fifteen (15) gallons** of propane over an **eight (8) hour** period. The user will be permitted to have on site a total of **twenty (20) gallons** in **four (4) five (5) gallon** containers per day.

3. A maximum of two (2) containers may be manifolded together at any one time. Excess flow valves will be required when tanks are manifolded. These should be located as close to or near discharge connection on the tank(s), but must be kept

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outside the booth or enclosure at all times.

4. Other propane containers not in use (both empty and full) shall be stored away from open flame, out of public way and in close proximity of users view and properly secured to prevent the tank from tipping or falling over. All hoses or lines between the propane tank and the propane device must be placed in a manner as to avoid being a trip hazard.
5. Provide a minimum of one (1) "3A:40BC," or larger rated fire extinguisher. The fire extinguisher shall display the State Fire Marshal's approved service tag (by an approved fire extinguisher service company) and be dated for current use. For new fire extinguishers without an approved service tag, a sales receipt dated within one (1) year may be accepted in place of an approved service tag.
6. Storage of propane containers shall not be permitted in adjacent buildings, vehicles, enclosed structures etc.
7. All propane operations shall be at least twenty-five (25) feet from any other open flame, any other propane operation, or any building, and shall be at least ten (10) feet away from any below grade transformer units.
8. Tents in which cooking is performed shall be separated from other tents, temporary membrane structures and canopies, by a minimum of twenty (20) feet. All propane containers must be kept outside the enclosure at all times.
9. Portable heaters shall be equipped with an approved automatic device to shut off the flow of gas to the burner(s) and pilot, if used, in the event of flame extinguishment or combustion failure.
10. At least one approved manual shut off valve shall be provided on piping between propane container and unit fueled by propane.
11. Outdoor cooking that produces sparks or grease-laden vapors shall be at least twenty (20) feet from any temporary membrane structure, tent or canopy.
12. All requested variation from any of these requirements must be submitted in writing, with the permit application, to the Fire Department for review and approval. Any approved variation will be limited to a specific site and specific use as described on the permit.
13. Catering or cooking equipment that is permanently mounted to a vehicle or trailer may be required to have an approved fixed extinguishing system installed.

**APPROVAL**

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An on site inspection of the user's operation by the Fire Department is required, and must be completed before to any permission to operate is granted, and prior to any permit being issued. Permission to operate will depend upon the Fire Inspector's final approval of the operation and equipment being used. Some of the common problems encountered during the Fire Department's on site inspection which can result in a permit not being issued are:

1. Propane tanks that are too large, or too many propane tanks. Propane tanks are limited to a maximum of five (5) gallons in size, and limited to a total of four (4) at the operation at one time (for a maximum of twenty (20) total gallons).
2. A fire extinguisher that is not currently certified, or that has a rating that is too small. A minimum of one fire extinguisher, with a minimum rating of 3A:40BC is required. The fire extinguisher must have a current approved certification tag attached; the date on the tag must be no more than one year ago.
3. Propane tank stored or used inside the booth or tent. All propane tanks must be kept outside all enclosures at all times. Propane tanks cannot be kept or used inside a booth, tent or any other enclosure, or under any canopy.
4. Propane operation placed too close to another hazard. Each propane operation must be at least twenty five (25) feet from any other propane operation and any building. Each propane operation must also be at least twenty five (25) feet from any open flame source associated with any another operation, and at least ten (10) feet from any below grade transformer unit.
5. Propane tanks are not secured or not kept upright. All propane tanks must be kept upright, and secured in a manner to prevent them from falling, tipping or being knocked over. Hoses and lines between the propane tank and the propane device must be placed in a manner as to avoid being a trip hazard.
6. For events which are greater than four (4) days in duration, and when the use of five (5) gallon containers is not practical, the request for the use of larger containers will be reviewed by the Fire Department, and may be approved on a case by case basis.