



**CHARLOTTE FIRE DEPARTMENT  
FIRE MARSHAL'S OFFICE  
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CHARLOTTE, NC 28206**



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## **Code/Procedural Interpretation**

### **CFD Interpretation: Use of Portable Outdoor Heaters**

**Date:** June 5, 2014

**Code Reference:** North Carolina Fire Code, Section 603

**Subject:** Can I use portable propane fueled radiant heaters on my restaurant patio or outdoor seating area?

#### **Interpretation:**

Yes, but only under certain circumstances. The North Carolina Fire Code allows the use of portable gas-fired outdoor heaters **ONLY** under the following guidelines:

1. Heaters cannot be used in any tent or under any canopy or membrane structure.
2. A minimum clearance of 5-feet shall be maintained between the heater and the building, combustible decorative material, or exit or access thereto.
3. Heaters shall not be located beneath any awning, sunshade or similar building attachments.
4. Heater shall be UL Listed and installed and maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's specifications.
5. Heater shall be fitted with a tip-over switch that will automatically shut off the flow of gas if heater is tilted to more than 15 degrees to vertical.
6. The heating element or combustion chamber shall be protected from physical contact.