



Orange County Fire Authority Community Risk Reduction INFORMATIONAL BULLETIN 02-20

Subject: Open-flame Cooking Devices on Balconies and Decks

Purpose: This informational bulletin provides clarification regarding regulations pertaining to use of barbeques and other open-flame cooking devices on balconies and decks in multifamily residential structures.

Section 308.1.4 of the 2019 California Fire Code regulating open-flame cooking devices was not adopted by the State Fire Marshal. This provision still appears in the on-line and print versions of the code book, however, it is there as suggested language should individual cities or counties choose to include it as an amendment to the California Fire Code when they adopt the CFC as their local fire code.

In the past, this provision had been adopted as an amendment into the local fire code by some of the jurisdictions served by OCFA. However, when the current version of the fire code was adopted, this provision was not included. As it is currently not a part of the local or state fire code, this provision cannot be enforced by city/county code enforcement officers or OCFA fire inspectors.

It is incumbent upon the person cooking to ensure that the device is being used safely. As with any open flame, reasonable caution and care should be taken to mitigate the potential for the device to be an unintended source of ignition. Follow the manufacturer's recommendations regarding clearance from vegetation, combustible furniture, decks and buildings, and overhangs such as balconies and eaves. Refer to the BBQ Safety flyer on the ocfa.org website for additional safety information.

While the fire code may not regulate these devices, some insurance companies may include a restriction on their use in their policies, and HOAs may stipulate certain conditions to enhance safety and mitigate complaints regarding smoke and odors. Please consult with these agencies regarding specific rules that may apply in your community.