



Open Flame & External Heating Elements Permit Information

Any open flame including votive candles, wax candles, outdoor grills, and chafing dishes will need an open flame permit. You must contact the City of Palo Alto Fire Department at firepermits@palocalto.gov. A permit fee will apply. A fire inspection may also be required.

Once you have been approved, by the CPAFD, please forward a copy of the permit to mpcc@palocalto.gov.

City of Palo Alto Fire Department does not have specific height requirements for votive candles, other than it needs to be tall enough that if a tissue paper is put over the opening, it does not ignite within 10 seconds. Please note the requirements listed below for open flame at any of the City of Palo Alto facilities:

1. An open flame permit is required for candles and other open flame devices.
2. They shall be secured in a glass globe, wire mesh cage or similar approved device that:
 - is stable and securely supported
 - has substantial noncombustible bases
 - protects the candle flames
 - prevents spillage of fuel/wax
 - is designed to return to upright position after tilted or self-extinguish if tipped over
 - encloses the flames – side openings allowed if 0.375-inch diameter or less; top openings allowed if distance to top enough that tissue paper placed on top will not ignite in 10 seconds.
3. Absolutely no handheld open flame devices (such as sparklers) are permitted.

Where food is prepared by a heating or cooking process such as, but not limited to, grilling, barbecuing, flambé, deep fat frying, all such operations shall be outdoors only and located at least 20 ft. from permanent buildings, and away from any roof overhangs.

The cooking device must be placed on top of a tarp or plywood to protect the ground surface.

All cooking operations shall be equipped with a minimum 2A:10BC fire extinguisher. This is in addition to the “K” type extinguisher required for deep fat frying operations. Extinguishers shall be clearly visible, and readily accessible. **YOU MUST SUPPLY YOUR OWN EXTINGUISHER.**