

Fuel Safety Bulletin

1997-01

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Topic: General

As we enter the new year, we look back over a year filled with changes and incidents which have left a few of us asking what the future may bring. In an effort to assist in the understanding of Codes and practices in the Province of Nova Scotia, we feel that a number of issues require clarification and we will endeavour to accomplish this through a series of these Fuel Safety Bulletins which will be published as required.

The issues to be addressed at this time are as follows;

- 1./ At a recent meeting with Nova Scotia Power Corporation inspectors, we were asked to develop a policy regarding clearances between propane cylinders/tanks and various electrical equipment. We have come to a mutual agreement that cylinders/tanks must be located at least 1 metre (3 feet) from domestic electrical metres. A pad mounted electrical transformer shall be considered to be a source of ignition for the purposes of container placement.
- 2./ Due to a number of venting problems which have arisen in the past year, we are forced to rule that gravity vented appliances will not be allowed in rooms which are serviced by a kitchen exhaust canopies nor will they be allowed in any area which may have a negative pressure. If such appliances are needed in these areas, they shall be under an approved exhaust canopy.
- 3./ There continues to be some confusion about ventilation and combustion air requirements on some appliances. This confusion seems to be limited to power vented appliances such as certain commercial water heaters and clothes dryers. Please read the certified installation instructions which come with these units as the air requirements for a power vented appliance are considerably greater than those for a gravity vented unit.
- 4./ Some confusion has arisen regarding the interpretation of Clause 6.7.7 of the CSA B149.2 Code. Please note that more than four (4) propane cylinders located against the wall of a building, will only be allowed if it is proven that there is no room for a single large tank.
- 5./ Exterior gas piping continues to be a problem as installers seem to think that the protection of this piping from corrosion damage is always someone else's responsibility. This is simply not the case, as it is required by Clause 6.16.1 of the CSA B149.1 Code. Please note that a quick coat of spray paint does not constitute proper protection.
- 6./ Some of you have been noticing electrical wires fastened to gas piping. The Canadian Electrical Code now requires that all piping systems be bonded to the panel. The gas lines may not be used as a ground conductor, but must be grounded. Please note the material that the bonding clamp is constructed from. It must be the same material as the pipe to prevent galvanic action.

- 7./ In the past year we have noted a number of venting systems on low-intensity radiant heaters which have shown signs of severe corrosion and, in some cases, complete failure in periods as short as ten (10) months. In each case, the problem could be traced to a chemical being drawn into the air intake of the appliance. In view of this problem, all low intensity radiant heaters shall have piped-in combustion air unless otherwise approved.
- 8./ Please remember that gas-fired fireplaces, in other than private dwellings, may not be installed in the access to an exit.
- 9./ Propane cylinders may not be installed under a fire escape or a required exit stairs.
- 10./ Once again we are finding propane cylinders being delivered to businesses which do not have proper, approved storage compounds. Once again, we remind you that cylinders delivered to businesses such as roofing contractors, rental companies, fork lift users etc. may only be delivered to storage compounds which have been approved by this office.
- 11./ The Office has , for your convenience, installed a toll free telephone line. Our number is 1-800-559-FIRE (3473).

Should there be any questions regarding any of these items, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned at our Halifax offices.

Sincerely

Dale C. Stewart
Chief Inspector, Fuel Safety