

Fuel Safety Bulletin

2001-01

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Subject: Propane cylinder storage cages/cabinets

Recently, we have noted an increasing number of cylinder storage cages/cabinets at industrial sites, convenience stores and service stations. These cages/cabinets are predominantly being used as cylinder exchange cages/cabinets, and are full of 20 pound cylinders, both full and empty.

Although these cylinder cages/cabinets are often located correctly, we are noting an increasing number of larger multiple-cage installations being put in place to handle the summer barbecue rush and to ease delivery schedules. The problem is that many of these are installed against building walls with improper bases.

For your information, the required clearances noted below are taken from the CSA B149.2-00 Propane Storage and Handling Code;

An outdoor *cylinder* storage area, special *cylinder* storage room, or a *cylinder* storage *building* described in [Clause 6](#) shall be located in accordance with [Table 6.3](#) with respect to

- (a) the nearest *building* or group of *buildings*;
- (b) the line of adjoining property that may be built upon;
- (c) public thoroughfares or sidewalks; and
- (d) the line of adjoining property occupied by schools, churches, hospitals, athletic fields, or other points of public gathering.

Table 6.3

Cylinder Storage Clearances

(See Clause 6.5.1.9.)

Quantity of propane stored lbs (kg)	Distance ft (m) to:	
	Items (a) and (b)	Items (c) and (d)
Up to and including 500 (225)	0 * †	10 (3)
501 (225) to 2500 (1135)	15 (4.5)	25 (7.5)
2501 (1135) to 5000 (2270)	25 (7.5)	25 (7.5)
Over 5000 (2270)	25 (7.5)	50 (15)

*3 ft (1 m) from any building opening.

†10 ft (3 m) from any mechanical air intake.

This table also includes the following footnote;

‡*Cylinders that have a maximum capacity of 20 lb (9 kg) intended for exchange or sale shall be stored in no more than four adjacent cabinets that may be located against a noncombustible building wall at one retail site. No more than one cabinet may be located against a combustible wall. Each cabinet shall contain no more than 500 lb (225 kg) of propane. Cabinets shall be 3 ft (1 m) from any building opening and 10 ft (3 m) from any mechanical air intake. Cabinets shall be 25 ft (7.5 m) from the line of adjoining property occupied by schools, churches, hospitals, athletic fields, or other points of public gathering.*

This code, therefore, will allow a maximum of 25x20 pound propane cylinders (either full or empty) against the combustible wall of a building. Up to 100x20 pound propane cylinders may be placed up against the concrete wall of a building. Windows are not considered as walls, and therefore cabinets may not be placed in front of window openings.

Clause 6.5.2.4(d) of the *CSA B149.2-00 Propane Storage and Handling Code* also requires that the cylinder cage be “**securely anchored in an upright position**”. This means that a cylinder cage located against the wall of a building must be securely anchored to a poured-in-place concrete pad or securely bolted to the masonry building wall.

In the future, please see that all cylinder storage cages/cabinets meet these requirements and remember that any change to a cylinder storage location requires a registration submission and number.

Should there be any questions regarding this issue, or any items that you would like addressed in a future Bulletin, please contact me at our Halifax office. Our phone number here is 424-5721 or 1-800-559-3473. Our Fax number is 902-424-3239.

Sincerely

Dale C. Stewart
Chief Inspector - Fuel Safety