

Safe Use of Gas Appliances at Church Venues and Events

Indoors vs. Outdoors

ALWAYS ensure gas appliances are installed by a licensed gas fitter, regularly safety checked, and properly maintained.

INDOOR GAS APPLIANCES including heaters

Indoor gas appliances are designed, manufactured and certified for indoor use only and are either flued to expel air and combustion products outside or have an inbuilt mechanism to maintain adequate indoor air quality.

All gas appliances need adequate ventilation to ensure that there is sufficient air for combustion (for gas to burn safely) and to dilute the products of combustion to safe levels.

If the gas consumption of the appliance exceeds 3MJ/h for each cubic metre of the room or enclosure volume, the space needs to be ventilated in accordance with the requirements of Australian Standard AS/NZS 5601: Gas installations that is referred to by the Regulations.

OUTDOOR GAS APPLIANCES including heaters.

When appliances are used in an outdoor area of a public venue, there is usually adequate natural ventilation. However, there may be some 'semi-outdoor' situations where there is possibly inadequate ventilation, such as alfresco areas, balconies, verandas, patios, marquees and tents.

An area is considered 'outdoors' in a public venue when it is an open-air situation with natural ventilation that ensures stagnant areas do not form, as these stagnant areas prevent the products of combustion from being rapidly dispersed by wind and natural convection. Also, in the unlikely event of a gas leak occurring, the area must permit escaping gases to be rapidly dispersed.

The following situations are considered to provide the natural ventilation required for an outdoor appliance to be used in a public venue:

- four open sides with a roof or overhead cover;
- four enclosed sides (walls) without a roof or overhead cover;
- two parallel walls or two walls at right angles to each other with a roof or overhead cover; and
- three walls, with the one open side having at least 25 per cent of the total wall area and the remaining three walls having an area of 30 per cent or more of unrestricted opening, with a roof or overhead cover.

Ease off the toxic gas.

REMEMBER THE GOLDEN RULE OF GAS:
If an appliance uses petrol or is attached to a portable gas bottle then it should **NEVER** be used indoors.

Use of petrol or gas appliances indoors can present serious danger, including death.

THE SILENT KILLER

Pollutant by-products such as carbon monoxide are undetectable - you can't see it, smell it or taste it. People, especially children, may be overcome by toxic fumes with little warning.



RISK PROFILE CHANGES

Weekly variables, such as number of people on site, operator experience, type of activity, etc. can render previous controls ineffective and increase the risk of an incident.



CULTURAL AMBIVALENCE

Leads to comfortable acceptance of dangerous practices. If used in MPC what's to stop it being used in a sabbath school room?



INHERENT FIRE DANGER

Instability if knocked over, leaking gas, placement and proximity to flammable items. Seek out safer alternatives.

