

# Key Things to Know When Installing or Using a Decorative Gas Appliance



## Certification

The International Fuel Gas Code guidance regarding outdoor decorative gas states that these appliances be tested in accordance with ANSI Z21.97 and installed in accordance with manufacturer's instructions. It is important that the product used reference certification that the product has been tested in accordance with ANSI Z21.97. This can be determined in the specification sheets and literature pertaining to the specific model of product (see examples to the right). Any product not certified to ANSI Z21.97 standards must be prohibited from use by property owners and managers.

## Manufacturer's Instructions

**Location:** Manufacturer's instructions for outdoor decorative gas appliances vary greatly regarding the distances to be maintained from other structures (vertically and horizontally) as well as the distance to supply tanks, where piped directly (see figures below). A minimum of 5 feet is recommended when no distance is provided by the manufacturer.

**Installation:** Where permanently installed, installation must be completed by a licensed plumber experienced with outdoor gas feeds.

**Maintenance:** Manufacturer's instructions also vary regarding the maintenance and care of the appliance.

## Local Codes

As decorative gas appliances are becoming more widely used, local state and local authorities are developing their own requirements for installation and operation.

In many cases the local codes simply expand on the wording provided by ICC. For example: Outdoor patio or space heaters and decorative heating appliances such as chiminea, fire pits and outdoor fireplaces that are fueled by Natural Gas or LP-GAS using a refillable tank or permanently installed are allowed for use within the City of Boston provided the appliance is listed or labeled by a recognized product testing organization. Where permanent, such installation shall be installed and permitted through the Inspection Services Department (ISD) of the City of Boston and installed by a licensed installer in accordance with all applicable codes and reference standards.

In some instances the local codes expand upon the requirements for specific circumstances. For example:

### Design

1. Outdoor decorative gas appliances and associated fuel gas systems shall be designed in accordance with NYC Construction Codes including applicable provisions of the NYC Fuel Gas Code, the NYC Fire Code, FDNY Rule 3 RCNY 404-03 and manufacturer instructions.
2. If the outdoor decorative gas appliance is installed such that it is accessible by the public then the appliance must be surrounded with 2 layers of tempered glass, with a 2-inch gap separating the glass layers to prevent exposure to hot surfaces and potential for burning.

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## *Recommendation*

The design, installation and maintenance of decorative gas appliances must comply with state and local codes and, where unavailable, with the International Fuel Gas Code, which states that outdoor decorative gas appliances must be tested in accordance with ANSI Z21-97 and installed per manufacturer's instructions. Where not specifically outlined in manufacturer's instructions, the distance to any structure should be no less than 5 feet. Property owners and managers of apartment buildings, condominiums and co-operatives, and commercial properties should ensure the inspection, maintenance and safe operation of decorative gas appliances by residence and staff is adhered to per manufacturers' instructions.

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