

TOWN OF HILTON HEAD ISLAND  
Fire and Rescue Department

Drew Laughlin – Mayor  
Stephen G. Riley – Town Manager

Lavarn Lucas - Fire Chief  
Joheida Fister – Fire Marshal

Bureau of Fire Prevention

January 27, 2011

Dear Owner/Occupant:

The State of South Carolina and the Town of Hilton Head Island have adopted the International Fire Code which specifically prohibits the use of open flame devices for multi family residential dwellings. The definition of a multi family dwelling is those that have units above or below them and multiple units on each floor.

This requirement does not pertain to town homes and duplexes as long as the town homes/duplex does not have any additional units above or below them. These types of units are classified as one/two family dwellings.

The International Fire Code states the following:

**Open-flame cooking devices.** Charcoal burners and other open flame cooking devices shall not be operated on combustible balconies or within ten feet of combustible construction.

This requirement comes from the potential for hot embers to fall from the cooking device and ignite a combustible surface, such as a wooden deck or balcony. The 10 foot separation also reduces the likelihood that a fire starting or cooking flare-ups will come in contact with combustible wall construction that is easily ignited.

The only exception to this requirement is if the building, balconies and decks are protected by an automatic sprinkler system.

**Liquefied-petroleum-gas-fueled cooking devices.** LP-gas burners having an LP-gas container with a water capacity greater than 2.5 pounds shall not be located on combustible balconies or within ten feet of combustible construction.

This requirement prohibits any gas grill larger than a camping stove.

In summary, regardless of the fuel type, **open flame cooking devices are not permitted to be used or stored on combustible balconies/patios or within ten feet of combustible construction.** Those who violate this regulation can be cited for the violation and fined up to \$1,092.50 daily.

The Bureau of Fire Prevention is requiring all owners and tenants to comply and remove gas and charcoal grills immediately.

Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,



Joheida B. Fister  
Fire Marshal