

# EnergySafety

Safe use of outdoor gas patio heaters



Department of Consumer  
and Employment Protection  
Government of Western Australia  
EnergySafety

## Safe use of outdoor gas patio heaters

### What is an outdoor gas patio heater?

An outdoor gas patio heater is a radiant heater designed to heat outdoor areas of domestic premises, restaurants, cafes etc.

Outdoor gas patio heaters may operate on natural gas via a flexible hose connected to a bayonet point or LP Gas.

This type of gas heater has become popular because it is an effective method for heating a localised outdoor area.

### Outdoor gas patio heaters must be approved

An outdoor gas patio heater must be approved for use. An approved appliance will have an approval label on it. Currently approvals are performed by the Australian Gas Association (AGA) and SAI Global. A listing of certified gas appliances and components can be viewed online at the AGA website [www.gas.asn.au](http://www.gas.asn.au), or the SAI Global website [www.sai-global.com](http://www.sai-global.com).



An outdoor gas patio heater

### Safe use of outdoor gas patio heaters

Outdoor gas patio heaters are designed for outdoor use and **must not be used indoors under any circumstances:**

- The use of this type of heater indoors has the potential to cause a fire or serious injury.

- The products of combustion produced during the operation of the appliance may create a dangerous environment indoors.
- The gas cylinders used for these heaters are normally 9 kgs (or more) - this size cylinder is not permitted to be used or stored indoors.

Improper use of a gas appliance is a breach of the Gas Standards (Gasfitting and Consumer Gas Installations) Regulations 1999.

### What is an outdoor area?

An outdoor area is an open-air situation that is not obstructed by buildings, structures etc, facilitating correct combustion and allowing products of combustion to be readily dispersed to atmosphere.

An alfresco area, veranda or balcony (large area) is considered outdoors when it is an open-air situation with natural ventilation. This ensures stagnant areas do not form, as these prevent the products of combustion from being rapidly dispersed by wind and natural convection.

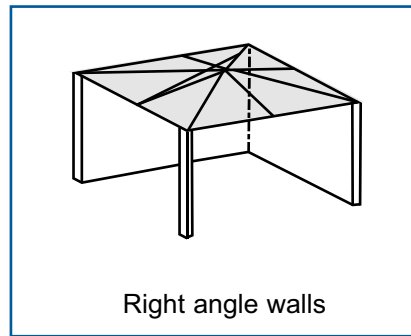
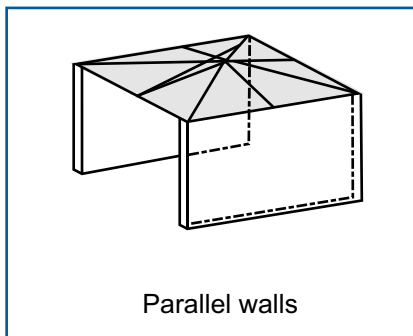
In the unlikely event of a gas leak occurring, a well-ventilated area will allow escaping gas to rapidly disperse.

The following situations are considered to provide the natural ventilation required for an outdoor patio heater to be used:

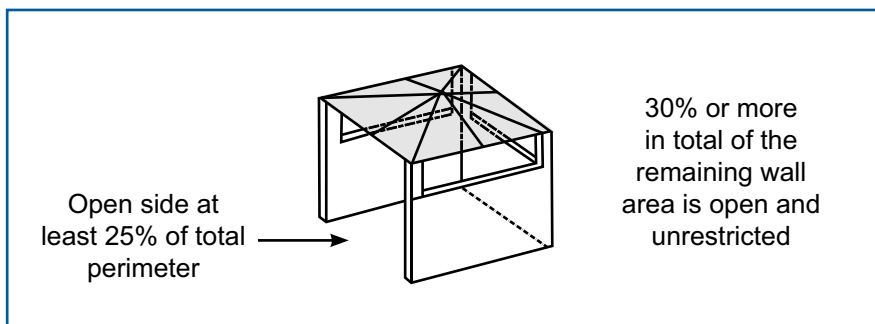
- Four open sides with a roof or overhead cover.
- Four enclosed sides (walls) without a roof or overhead cover.

The information in this brochure does not take precedence over the Gas Standards (Gasfitting and Consumer Gas Installations) Regulations 1999 or manufacturer's instructions.

- Two parallel walls or two walls at right angles to each other with a roof or overhead cover.



- Three walls, with the one open side being at least 25 per cent of the total perimeter and the remaining three walls having an area of 30 per cent or more of unrestricted opening, with a roof or overhead cover.





A gas patio heater in use in an acceptable outdoor area

### **Safety precautions when using outdoor gas patio heaters**

Follow these basic safety precautions when using an outdoor gas patio heater:

- ◆ Ensure that the outdoor area is NOT enclosed.
- ◆ Ensure the heater is located away from flammable materials, or materials that may shatter or explode due to heat eg glass.
- ◆ Read the manufacturer's instructions before operating the appliance.
- ◆ Ensure the appliance is stable.
- ◆ Operate the appliance with all panels, covers and guards in place.
- ◆ Turn the gas off at the cylinder when the appliance is not in use.
- ◆ Have the appliance serviced by a qualified person in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
- ◆ If a gas leak develops, turn the appliance off at the valve. Do not use the appliance until it is repaired by an authorised person.
- ◆ Store the heater and spare gas cylinders outdoors and in an upright position.
- ◆ Ensure chemicals or flammable materials are not stored near the appliance.

### **Further information**

For further information on this subject, please contact your gas supplier or the relevant heater manufacturer.



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### **Regional offices**

Goldfields/Esperance	(08) 9021 5966
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If you require the services of an interpreter, contact the Translating and Interpreting Services (TIS) on 131 450 and ask for connection to EnergySafety on 9422 5200.

This publication is available on request in other formats to assist people with special needs.

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