



OPEN FLAME GUIDELINES  
FOR  
SOUTHEAST MISSOURI STATE UNIVERSITY  
CAPE GIRARDEAU, MISSOURI

*Prepared by*

SOUTHEAST MISSOURI STATE UNIVERSITY  
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

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APPROVED BY SOUTHEAST MISSOURI STATE UNIVERSITY ENVIRONMENTAL  
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## **1.0 PURPOSE**

The purpose of this guideline is to provide procedures by which open flame devices may be used at the Southeast Missouri State University campus and public buildings (including spaces leased and used by Southeast). It is the intent of this guideline to reduce potential hazards which may contribute to loss of property or life at Southeast. This guideline is not intended to restrict the use of laboratory, facilities maintenance, or food service equipment used in normal operations.

## **2.0 RESPONSIBILITIES**

All Employees:

- Obtain an “Open Flame Request Form” at the Environmental Health and Safety Office or the EH&S website.
- Organizations, groups or individuals sponsoring events that include open flame devices must complete the “Open Flame Request Form” at least 10 days prior to the event.
- The organization, group or individual applying for the use of open flame devices must provide a layout of the venue that shall include the location of the devices along with the location and number of fire extinguishers.
- Open flame devices will only be approved when appropriate measures have been taken to insure fire safety.

Environmental Health & Safety:

- Review each event on case-by-case basis to determine the appropriateness of the venue for the open flame devices.
- Approve or deny the use of open flames in a timely manner and report back to the requestor.
- Shall determine the need for any additional safety measures prior to open flame use.
- Maintain records of open flame requests.
- May suspend the use of open flame devices at their discretion.

## **3.0 PROCEDURE**

The use or possession of open flame devices shall be prohibited in all residence halls and apartment complexes. The use or possession of open flame devices in academic/support buildings is only allowed after obtaining written approval or as listed below as an exception.

- Open flame devices shall include, but are not limited to, candles, potpourri burners, torches, bonfires, oil lamps, incense, butane burners or any other flame producing devices.
- Approval will be granted on case-by-case bases for special events, and only when specific safeguards are taken to avoid ignition of combustible materials or injury to occupants. Safeguards include, but are not limited to, adequate fire detection/alarm systems, on-site monitoring, fire extinguishers in place, sturdy protective holders and/or bases, and globes as needed. Candles are not permitted in department or individual offices unless an “Open Flame Request Form” has been approved.
- Where appropriate, open flame devices used in conjunction with theatrical performances are allowed to be used when adequate safety precautions have been taken in accordance with NFPA 160, Standard for Flame Effects Before an Audience.

### **Exceptions:**

- A “Open Flame Request Form” is not required in the following circumstances:
  - Educational and research science labs
  - Food service equipment used in normal dining operations
- Gas barbecue grills are permitted when the following conditions are met:
  - Minimum distance of 20’ from the building (no indoor grilling);
  - Grill is located on a non-combustible surface, such as a sidewalk;
  - Propane tanks shall not be stored inside buildings without the approval of Environmental Health and Safety Office;
  - Fire extinguisher is readily available and staff has been trained on proper use.
- **Candles are permitted for religious/ceremonial purposes only when the following guidelines are followed:**
  - Candles must be constantly attended while they are lit.
  - The candles need a firm base of support. This can be a wide based candle supported by a firm surface or candelabra. 3” pillar candles provided their own base of support when they are less than 12” high and when they are placed on a firm surface. Any candle must be fastened in place to prevent overturning, shall be located away from occupants using the area and away from possible contact with drapes, curtains or other combustibles (capable of igniting or burning).
  - There must be a non-combustible surface under the candles. If a drape or cloth is placed under a candle the cloth must be treated with flame retardant.

- There must be ABC type fire extinguishers readily available and trained attendants standing by to use them if necessary.
- Candle light vigils are permitted if the venue is outside of all buildings. Candles shall be lit outside and extinguished prior to entrance to any building.



OPEN FLAME REQUEST FORM  
Southeast Missouri State University

Person, Group or Organization making request: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Event: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Event: \_\_\_\_\_

Location (building & room #) of Event: \_\_\_\_\_

Is the building equipped with a fire alarm system? \_\_\_\_\_

Is the building equipped with a fire sprinkler system? \_\_\_\_\_

Number of people expected to attend this Event: \_\_\_\_\_

Describe the open flame devices you wish to use and how they will be used: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Who will provide fire watch (has hands-on fire extinguisher training and has an ABC fire extinguisher readily available)? \_\_\_\_\_

Provide a layout of the venue that includes the location of the devices, location of the audience, and the location and number of fire extinguishers.

Approve \_\_\_ Denied \_\_\_ By \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Comments \_\_\_\_\_

**Send completed for to EH&S at least 10 days prior to the event.**