



CITY OF HOUSTON

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Fire Department

Fire Marshal

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Subject: Open-flame *Sterno*-type product use

The use open-flame devices such as *Sterno* and all similar liquid, semi-liquid, gel or solid products for heating of foods and/or beverages will be permitted in accordance with the City of Houston *Fire Code*, Section 308.3, provided the following procedures and safety precautions are met:

- a. *Sterno* containers must be used in holder devices designed and manufactured for that purpose. *Sterno* containers not in an approved holder shall be not be allowed.
- b. Materials used on the table must be flame retardant. Containers in holder devices not in racks designed to hold the devices must be placed on a non-combustible surface. Containers in use shall not be placed directly on combustible table coverings.
- c. Any and all materials used to shield the heating devices from sight shall be flame retardant and kept clear of any contact with the open-flame containers. The shielding materials shall not interfere with ready access to the containers. Containers in use shall not be located on or near decorative material or similar combustible materials.
- d. At least one 2A-10BC fire extinguisher must be readily accessible within 25 feet. In addition, dampened towels should be provided in the immediate vicinity.
- e. Persons responsible for setting up and maintaining the *Sterno* must be knowledgeable in maintaining the approved table layout and in the use of a fire extinguisher.
- f. The set-up must not be left in an unoccupied area. The person responsible for setting up and maintaining the table where *Sterno* is used for warming food or beverages

(small scale serving) may leave the room temporarily provided the other occupants are aware of the open flame (small signs must be posted for said warnings).

g. Storage of *Sterno* and all similar product containers shall be in accordance with the *Fire Code* as to appropriate storage requirements per building and occupancy type, and the amount being stored.

R.W. Galvan
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