

# Use of Barbecue Grills



## Overview

The use of barbecue grills in New York City is strictly regulated, including extinguishing materials, types of fuel, and separation distance from combustible materials. This update provides requirements for the use of barbecues at Weill Cornell Medicine (WCM).

## Applicability

This update applies to all barbecue grill use at WCM.

## Responsibilities

**Environmental Health and Safety (EHS)** provides technical assistance and guidance on barbecue use and inspects areas using barbecues for compliance.

**Housing** ensures that guidelines for barbecue use are followed in residential areas and incorporates barbecue guidelines in their Housing residential information.

**Student-Organizing Groups/Departments** ensure that contractors and/or students will meet WCM barbecue requirements when planning student functions.

**WCM faculty, staff, students, and contractors** follow the guidelines listed in this document when using barbecues.

## Guidelines

### PROPANE GRILLS

Propane grills are not permitted under any circumstance.

### NON-RESIDENTIAL AREAS

Due to the close proximity of all non-residential buildings on the WCM campus, the use of barbecue grills in these areas is strictly prohibited unless authorized in writing by Environmental Health and Safety. Contact EHS well in advance of using barbecues to request authorization.

### RESIDENTIAL AREAS

- 77th Street: All barbecue grills are prohibited.
- Southtown: All barbecue grills are prohibited.
- Olin Hall: Electrical and charcoal grills are permitted **ONLY** when scheduled with Housing as a special event. Contact Housing for more information and review the Barbecue Grill Usage Guidelines below.
- Lasdon House: All barbecue grills are prohibited.
- Belfer Research Building Terrace: All barbecue grills are prohibited.

### BARBECUE GRILL USAGE GUIDELINES

The following guidelines must be followed when a barbecue grill is authorized for use.

#### Charcoal Grills

Charcoal may be used in a grill if the following requirements are met:

- **The total grate area of the grill does not exceed 10 square feet.**
- The grill is at least 10 feet away from any combustible materials (e.g., cardboard).
- The grill is at least 10 feet away from any building.



**Weill Cornell  
Medicine**

**Environmental Health and Safety**

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- A garden-type hose that is attached to a water supply or at least one portable fire extinguisher with a minimum 4A rating must be provided.
- Only barbecue starter fluid is used to start the grill.
- Starter fluid is used sparingly and never added to an open flame, which can easily flashback along the fluid's path to the container.
- Only smokeless coals containing no mesquite, woodchips, or other substances that produce an aroma may be used. Coals are soaked with water after cooking is completed.
- Ashes are only removed after they are completely cooled.
- Damp or wet coals are stored in a well-ventilated area to prevent spontaneous combustion during the drying process.

### Electric Grills

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**Electrical** barbecue grills may be used if the following requirements are met:

- **The total grate area of the grill does not exceed 10 square feet.**
- The grill is at least 10 feet away from any combustible materials (e.g., cardboard).
- The grill is at least 10 feet away from any building.
- At least one 10lb ABC fire extinguisher must be provided.
- Flammable liquids are not used to start the grill.
- The manufacturer's instructions in the use of an electric grill are followed.
- Only adequately rated extension cords are used to reduce the risk of an electrical fire.

### Additional Requirements

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The following requirements must be met for the use of **any** barbecue grill:

- Check with the building management for additional building-specific requirements.
- Do not wear loose clothing that might catch fire.
- Use long-handled barbecue tools and/or flame resistant mitts.
- Keep alcoholic beverages away from the grill; they may be flammable!
- Never leave the grill unattended.
- Do not cook in areas where smoke would bother other building occupants.

**Please note:** Environmental Health and Safety, Housing, and Engineering and Maintenance reserve the right to inspect and declare "UNAPPROVED" any barbecue that creates a hazard or is inappropriate to a particular location based on specific circumstances, codes and/or legal requirements.

### References

- **NYC Fire Code Chapter 3 Section 307.5 Portable Outdoor Barbecues**