



State University of New York at Potsdam

Open Flame Policy

Effective Date: 04/22/2018

Last Updated: 06/14/2022

## **Policy on Use of Open Flame and Spark-Producing Devices**

To ensure the safety of the SUNY Potsdam community, the use of candles, sparklers, incense, and other flame or spark-producing devices is strictly prohibited on campus. This includes residence halls, academic buildings, and outdoor areas.

## **Exceptions for Ceremonial or Religious Observances**

Recognizing the importance of certain ceremonial and religious practices, exceptions to this policy may be granted. To request an exemption, individuals must submit a written application detailing the nature of the event, the specific items to be used, and the safety measures in place. Applications should be sent to [safety@potsdam.edu](mailto:safety@potsdam.edu) at least 10 business days prior to the event.

## **Application Process**

1. **Prepare a Written Request:** Include the event's purpose, date, location, items to be used, and proposed safety precautions.
2. **Submit the Request:** Email the request to [safety@potsdam.edu](mailto:safety@potsdam.edu) with the subject line "Request for Exemption to Open Flame Policy."
3. **Await Approval:** The Office of Environmental Health & Safety will review the request and respond within five business days.

## **Safety Requirements for Approved Exceptions**

If an exception is granted, the following safety measures must be strictly adhered to:

- **Supervision:** A designated individual must monitor the flame or spark-producing device at all times.
- **Fire Extinguishing Equipment:** Appropriate fire extinguishing equipment must be readily accessible and a minimum of (1) college employee trained in fire extinguisher use must be present.



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- **Location:** Devices must be used in areas free of flammable materials and away from fire detection systems to prevent accidental activation.
- **Duration:** Devices should only be lit for the minimum time necessary for the ceremony or observance.

Failure to comply with these safety measures may result in immediate revocation of the exemption and potential disciplinary action.

### **Non-Compliance**

Unauthorized use of candles, sparklers, incense, or similar devices will result in disciplinary action in accordance with university policies.

### **Contact Information**

For questions or further information, please contact the Office of Environmental health & Safety at [safety@potdam.edu](mailto:safety@potdam.edu).

This policy is effective immediately and will be reviewed annually.

\*Note: This policy aligns with fire safety standards observed by other similar Institutions of Higher Education which prohibits the use of open flame devices in residence halls, with exceptions made for recognized religious or festive uses upon approval.