

## Safe management of communal gas barbecues

This document provides guidance on the safe installation, operation, inspection, and maintenance of gas barbecues in public and private open-space environments, including, but not limited to, public parks, caravan parks, resorts, strata properties, and shared open-space facilities.



### Objective

- Support compliance with relevant Australian Standards, state gas safety regulations, and Work Health and Safety (WHS) obligations
- Reduce risks associated with gas leakage, fire, and misuse
- Promote consistent and safe operation of shared-use barbecue facilities

This document is not a substitute for site-specific risk assessment or regulatory advice. Use in conjunction with:

- A licensed gasfitter
- The appliance manufacturer's installation and operating instructions
- Site WHS/OH&S representatives



### Relevant standards and regulatory framework

All gas barbecue installations, appliances, and operations must comply with current versions of applicable Australian Standards and state-based legislation, including but not limited to:

#### Primary Australian standards

- **AS/NZS 5601.1 – Gas Installations (General Installations)**  
Governs installation requirements, including pipework, appliance location, ventilation, clearances, isolation valves, and commissioning.
- **AS/NZS 5263.1.7 – Gas Appliances, Part 1.7: Domestic Outdoor Gas Appliances**  
Covers appliance safety, combustion performance, construction, and certification requirements for domestic gas barbecues.
- **AS/NZS 1596 – The Storage and Handling of LP Gas**  
Sets requirements for safe storage, handling, and separation distances for LPG cylinders.
- **AS/NZS 1869 – Gas Hoses and Hose Assemblies**  
Specifies construction, testing, and marking requirements for gas hoses.

### IMPORTANT

While AS/NZS 5263.1.7 applies to the design and certification of domestic outdoor gas barbecues, such appliances are commonly used in commercial and public-access settings. Installation, location, and operation in these environments must additionally comply with AS/NZS 5601.1 and relevant state legislation.

AS/NZS 4332 applies primarily to LP Gas storage vessels (larger tanks and installations). For typical barbecue cylinders, AS 1596 and AS/NZS 5601.1 are generally the controlling standards unless otherwise specified by the authority having jurisdiction.

#### State and local regulatory requirements

Installations must also comply with:

- State-based gas safety legislation and regulators (e.g. Energy Safe Victoria, Queensland Petroleum and Gas Inspectorate)
- Local Council building and planning requirements
- Any strata, body corporate, or park-specific obligations

Consultation with the licensed gasfitter, insurers, and relevant authority is required to confirm site-specific obligations. **This document is provided as guidance only.**



## Installation requirements

### 1. Licensed installation and compliance

- All installation, repair, and commissioning work must be carried out by a licensed gasfitter
- A Certificate of Compliance (or equivalent statutory documentation) must be issued at completion and retained by the site operator
- The installer is responsible for ensuring compliance with:
  - Manufacturer's instructions
  - Australian Standards
  - State gas regulations
  - Local building and fire safety requirements

No installation may proceed without verified appliance certification and site suitability.

Certificates of Compliance and service records should be retained for the minimum period required under applicable state legislation and WHS record-keeping obligations.

### 2. Appliance certification and approval

- All gas barbecues must display a valid Australian certification plate or compliance label
- Imported appliances must be approved by the relevant gas safety authority prior to installation
- Modified, damaged, or uncertified appliances must not be installed or operated

### 3. Location, ventilation, and clearances

- Gas barbecues must only be installed in approved outdoor areas as defined by AS/NZS 5601.1
- Adequate ventilation must be provided to:
  - Allow combustion air supply
  - Prevent accumulation of unburnt gas
  - Safely disperse combustion products

#### Outdoor area definition (Guidance)

Outdoor areas must meet the definition and ventilation requirements of AS/NZS 5601.1, including Appendix J (Natural Ventilation). Areas that do not meet minimum openness ratios, ceiling height limits, or permanent ventilation requirements must not be used for gas barbecues.

Outdoor areas may include:

- Completely open-air installations
- Structures with a roof and at least two permanently open sides
- Areas that meet the minimum openness and ventilation criteria set out in AS/NZS 5601.1

Enclosed or partially enclosed areas that do not meet these requirements are not permitted.

#### Surface and clearance requirements

- Install on a firm, level, non-combustible surface
- Maintain minimum clearances as specified by both the manufacturer and AS/NZS 5601.1 to:
  - Combustible materials
  - Overhead structures
  - Adjacent fixtures



## Installation requirements

### 4. Built-in, cabinet, and enclosure installations

For inbuilt or cabinet-mounted barbecues:

- Cabinetry must incorporate permanent ventilation openings. Ventilation openings must be sized, located, and constructed in accordance with AS/NZS 5601.1 requirements for appliance enclosures
- Avoid enclosed voids where gas could accumulate
- Follow manufacturer specifications for:
  - Insulating liners
  - Heat shielding
  - Minimum clearances
- Gas cylinder storage must be separate from the appliance and designed in accordance with LPG storage standards

All designs must be reviewed and approved by a licensed gasfitter prior to construction.

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## Operational safety controls

### 1. Signage and user information

Clear, durable signage should be installed at each barbecue location, including:

- Basic operating instructions
- Emergency shutdown procedures
- Warnings regarding flammable materials
- Advice to contact emergency services in the event of a persistent gas leak or fire

Signage should be weather-resistant and easily readable.

### 2. Supervision and use

- Barbecues must always be supervised by a responsible adult during operation
- Owners of public facilities should provide guidance on safe use during peak periods and events
- Children must not operate gas controls or ignition systems

### 3. Control of flammable and combustible materials

- Do not store flammable liquids, chemicals, aerosols, or spare gas cylinders near barbecue installations
  - Keep the surrounding area free of:
    - Leaf litter
    - Grease build-up
    - Cleaning chemicals
    - Packaging or rubbish
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## Gas cylinder storage and handling

All gas cylinder storage arrangements must be determined in consultation with a licensed gasfitter and comply with applicable standards and local requirements.

For gas cylinders associated with gas appliances, AS/NZS 5601.1 generally takes precedence over AS 1596 for location, ventilation, and separation requirements, unless otherwise directed by the authority having jurisdiction.



### General requirements

- Gas cylinders must be stored upright and secured to prevent falling
- Adequate natural low and high-level ventilation must be provided to disperse leaked gas
- Ventilation openings must be:
  - Permanent
  - Unobstructed
  - Located at the lowest point of the enclosure

Typical guidance includes vents at the base of the cabinet (side or floor), sized in accordance with AS/NZS 5601.1 and AS 1596.

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### Separation and safety

- Gas cylinders must be kept away from ignition sources and heat
  - Gas cylinders must not be in the same compartment as the barbecue appliance
  - Gas cylinder compartments must be ventilated and compliant with applicable standards
  - Gas cylinder valves must be closed when not in use
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### Routine safety checks and maintenance

Maintenance and inspection programs must align with:

- Manufacturer's manuals
- WHS and insurance obligations
- Site risk profile and usage frequency

#### 1. Example routine checks

- Inspect hoses for cracks, abrasion, or deterioration
- Check regulators for corrosion or mechanical damage
- Confirm ignition systems operate correctly
- Ensure isolation valves and gas cocks function and are turned off when not in use
- Check for grease, food residue, and combustible debris

#### 2. Leak detection and emergency response

If a gas odour is detected:

1. Shut off the gas supply immediately
2. Turn off all nearby appliances
3. Extinguish open flames
4. Ventilate the area
5. Avoid operating electrical switches or ignition sources
6. Contact a licensed gasfitter and/or emergency services
7. Emergency services should be contacted where a gas leak cannot be immediately isolated, a fire occurs, or there is any risk to public safety

#### 3. Scheduled servicing

- Servicing must be carried out only by licensed gasfitters
  - Maintain service records, including:
    - Dates
    - Findings
    - Corrective actions
    - Technician details
  - **Appliance modification is prohibited unless authorised by the manufacturer and completed by a certified technician**
  - Any authorised modification must maintain appliance certification and comply with applicable Australian Standards and state approval requirements
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### Staff training and record keeping

Consult with WHS/OH&S representatives to develop appropriate training for staff responsible for managing barbecue facilities.

Training should cover:

- Emergency response and shutdown procedures
- Leak recognition and reporting
- Safe user guidance
- Identification of unsafe or non-compliant equipment

Training and inspection records should be retained for compliance and audit purposes.

### SUMMARY

A structured, standards-aligned approach to gas barbecue management significantly reduces safety risks and supports regulatory compliance in commercial and public environments. Proper installation, ventilation, routine inspection, staff training, and clear operational controls are essential to safe, reliable, and user-friendly barbecue facilities.

If you have questions about managing your communal gas barbecue or setting up your site to meet these safety standards, our Account Management team can help. We support councils, holiday parks, and asset owners every day with practical advice on safer barbecue environments.

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