

(For the Fire Marshal's Newsletter)

Code Corner

Chimineas and Outdoor Fireplaces

Code Question:

Does the Ohio Fire Code prohibit the use of Chimineas and other outdoor fireplaces?

Answer:

NO. Although the Ohio Fire Code generally prohibits open burning, there are provisions to address allowable burning situations. The code provides specific definitions for terms such as "Bonfire", "Open burning" and "Recreational Fire". The definitions are written such that the question may arise as to whether Chimineas and outdoor fireplaces are permitted. A Chiminea is typically a clay or ceramic light bulb shaped {inverted} appliance with an open front. The Chiminea is often provided with a lid and an iron stand and is used mostly to provide ambience and warmth on an outdoor patio or deck. Some Chimineas and outdoor fireplaces are designed such that they may also be used as a grill. As the code references listed below are provisions of the BOCA model code that have not been modified by the fire marshal, an informal interpretation was obtained from BOCA staff. The opinion set forth in the response from BOCA indicates that the Chimineas are controlled burning devices that are not intended to be regulated by the opening burning code provisions. Further, the use of these devices could be considered a recreational fire as they may be utilized in cooking food for human consumption. The intent of the code as expressed by BOCA staff is consistent with our interpretation of the code as it applies to Chimineas and outdoor fireplaces. This approach provides a reasonable application of these code requirements.