

THE CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
NEW YORK, NY 10007

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: October 14, 2020

MEDIA CONTACT: pressoffice@cityhall.nyc.gov, (212) 788-2958

RECOVERY AGENDA: NEW YORK CITY RELEASES WINTER OUTDOOR DINING GUIDANCE

NEW YORK—Mayor Bill de Blasio joined the Department of Buildings (DOB), Department of Transportation (DOT), and the Fire Department of New York (FDNY) today to release thorough guidance for city restaurants planning to stay open and serve customers outdoors with heating devices this fall and winter. The announcement furthers New York City’s efforts, laid out in the Mayor’s [recovery agenda](#), to become the world’s capital for healthy outdoor living.

In September, Mayor de Blasio announced the City’s popular [Open Restaurants](#) program will be extended year-round and made permanent. The program, which has enrolled more than 10,500 establishments since its inception in June, has allowed New Yorkers to enjoy meals in safe, healthy outdoor environments. All restaurants must abide by state restrictions on operating in COVID hotspots. Business owners should consult www.NYC.Gov/CovidZone for more information.

“These guidelines are designed to keep diners, employees, and pedestrians safe and healthy – and we look forward to giving New Yorkers more chances than ever to enjoy the outdoors year-round,” said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**. “Restaurants make New York City the greatest city in the world, and we’re proud to support their continued recovery from this crisis.”

Participants in the Open Restaurants program interested in providing comfort heating for their customers in outdoor dining areas have three options:

- **Electric radiant heaters** will be allowed in sidewalk and roadway seating setups. For full guidance from the Department of Buildings, click [here](#).
- **Natural gas radiant heaters** will be allowed on the sidewalk only. For full guidance from the Department of Buildings, click [here](#). Natural gas radiant heaters must also comply with the Fire Code.
- **Portable heaters fueled by propane** will be allowed on the sidewalk only. Propane heating will be regulated by the Fire Department, with requirements for safe handling, use and storage. For full guidance from the Fire Department, click [here](#).

Food service establishments with private outdoor dining spaces may use heating devices subject to the applicable guidance from FDNY and/or DOB.

Each agency has focused on streamlining the permitting processes to make installing these outdoor heating options as easy as possible for businesses, while ensuring strict adherence to safety protocols.

“The Department will work closely with our fellow agencies to ensure that outdoor dining can continue to operate safely for business owners, employees, and customers,” said **Fire Commissioner Daniel A. Nigro**.

"New Yorkers are resilient and adaptable, and city government should be as well," said **Department of Buildings Commissioner Melanie La Rocca**. "Streamlining the outdoor heating requirements will help our friends and neighbors weather this crisis. We are offering clear guidance to restaurant owners so they know what they need to do to safely keep outdoor dining open now that summer has come to a close."

“Just as evenings grow more brisk, we are happy to provide restaurants with the proper guidance on outdoor heating to keep their customers warm,” said **DOT Commissioner Polly Trottenberg**. “We thank our colleagues at FDNY and the Buildings Department, who are assuring that above all, Open Restaurants continue to operate safely during the colder months. We ask that the thousands of participating restaurants carefully comply with the new rules.”

The pandemic has reinforced the direct connection between public health, our economy, and social justice. As we look towards the future, a healthy recovery must include reimagining how the City uses its open spaces. In the 19th century, following the outbreak of Cholera, the City began a period of open space creation that brought us Central Park and other beloved open spaces. COVID-19 has again caused us to prioritize open space in order to promote New Yorkers’ health and economic wellbeing.

###