

Electric Patio Heater Permit Checklist

FOR RESTAURANT AND BUSINESS OWNERS

1. Do You Need a Permit?

You likely do NOT need a permit if:

- You are simply plugging a UL-listed portable or wall-mounted outdoor electric heater into an existing outdoor receptacle with no new wiring or circuit changes.
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You likely DO need a permit if:

- Electrical permits are required for installing or modifying wiring, circuits, panel upgrades.
→ portland.gov
- You are changing mechanical or heating equipment (even electric) that constitutes a mechanical trade work. The City of Portland Bureau of Development Services Outdoor Dining Program guidelines note that use of some outdoor heaters (especially propane) may require Fire Bureau permit.
→ portland.gov
- You are using an outdoor area for dining/heating in the public right-of-way or sidewalk/parking lane (which triggers additional permits under Chapter 17.25 “Outdoor Dining”).
→ portland.gov

2. Quick Checklist for Installing Electric Patio Heaters

Step	What to Do	Who to Contact
1. Check Outlets	Confirm outdoor receptacle has GFCI protection (test/reset) and weatherproof cover rated for outdoor use.	Licensed electrician
2. Check Heater Specs	Verify voltage/amps match existing circuits. Ensure the unit is certified to UL or ETL standards for outdoor use.	Product manufacturer / electrician
3. Assess Circuit	Determine if the heater’s load fits the existing circuit; if you’re adding additional heaters you may need a dedicated circuit or circuit upgrade.	Licensed electrician
4. Wiring / Circuit Upgrade (if needed)	If you are adding circuits, new wiring, modifying panels, apply for an electrical/trade permit.	Bureau of Development Services / electrician
5. Outdoor Dining/Patio Setup	If heaters will be part of an outdoor dining area (especially in the sidewalk or parking lane), determine whether an outdoor dining permit under Chapter 17.25 is required. (portland.gov) Also check fire-clearance, ventilation, combustible materials.	Bureau of Development Services / electrician

3. Permit Checklist and Timelines

Step	What to Do	Who to Contact
1. Hire a Licensed Electrician	Engage an electrician licensed (Oregon CCB + electrical license) for the work. (portland.gov)	Business owner
2. Electrician Applies for Electrical/ Trade Permit	Use the Bureau of Development Services (BDS) DevHub or file via email/in-person. For work involving wiring/circuits outdoors, follow the "Do You Need a Permit?" guidelines.	BDS (503-823-7300)
3. Secure Permit & Conduct Work	Permit issued, job card obtained, inspections scheduled and passed.	Electrician / BDS
4. Outdoor Dining / Fire Review (if applicable)	If heater usage is part of outdoor dining or in public right-of-way, secure outdoor dining permit and verify Fire Bureau requirements (e.g., clearance, fuel type, usage in public sidewalk).	Portland Fire Bureau / Outdoor Dining Program (503-823-7373)
5. Install Heaters	After approval, install heaters per manufacturer instructions. Keep permit/inspection documentation on site.	Business owner / Electrician

4. Pro Tips

- If you use the sidewalk or parking lane for outdoor dining & heaters, make sure you have the correct permit under [Chapter 17.25 \(Outdoor Dining\)](#) so you're compliant.
- Even if you are only installing plug-in heaters, ensure you have outdoor-rated wiring/outlets and safe circuit capacity.
- If you are using heaters other than electric (e.g., propane), you'll need additional fire permits (Portland Fire Bureau portable propane device permit, etc.).
→ portland.gov
- Portable electric heaters may still require permits if they alter wiring or circuit. Oregon Electrical Safety rules say permanent wiring or devices need a permit.
→ oregon.gov

Compiled from public permitting sources (2025 update).
This is general information, not legal advice.