

Electric Patio Heater Permit Checklist Oakland

FOR RESTAURANT AND BUSINESS OWNERS

1. Do You Need a Permit?

You likely do NOT need a permit in Oakland if:

- You're plugging portable or wall-mounted electric heater certified to UL/ETL standards into an existing outdoor outlet (like a 120 V outlet).
- You're not adding new wiring, conduit, or panels.
- The outlet is GFCI-protected and covered for outdoor weather exposure (if it has test/reset buttons)
- You're not modifying the electrical system or structure in any way.

You likely DO need a permit if:

- You're adding or extending electrical circuits or installing conduit outdoors.
- The installation requires a new breaker, panel upgrade, or junction box.
- The heater is hard-wired (not plug-in).
- The system involves new outdoor wiring in a public area (e.g., sidewalk or parklet).
- Fire-safety review required if heaters are fixed, hard-wired, or located in enclosed or covered areas. ([Oakland Fire Prevention Bureau](#))

References/Sources

- [City of Oakland Planning & Building Department: Apply for an Electrical Permit](#)
- [Oakland Fire Prevention Bureau: Permits & Inspections](#)
- [California Electrical Code § 89.121](#)

2. Quick Checklist for Installing Electric Patio Heaters

Step	What to Do	Who to Contact
1. Check Outlets	Confirm GFCI protection and weatherproof covers for outdoor use.	Licensed electrician
2. Check Heater Specs	Verify voltage/amps match existing outlets to avoid overload.	Product manufacturer
3. Add Wiring (if needed)	Apply for an electrical permit through Oakland's Accela portal.	City of Oakland Planning & Building Department: Apply for an Electrical Permit (permitinfo@oaklandca.gov, (510) 238-3443)
4. Fire / Parklet Setup	Verify clearance and ventilation; if heaters are near combustible décor or in a parklet, Fire Prevention approval may be required.	Oakland Fire Prevention Bureau (fireprevention@oaklandca.gov, (510) 238-3851)
5. Store Documentation	Keep manufacturer instructions on site.	Business owner

3. Permit Checklist and Timelines

Step	What to Do	Who to Contact
1. Hire a Licensed Electrician	Ensure your contractor holds a current CA C-10 electrical license.	CSLB License Lookup
2. Electrician Applies for Permit	Apply online via Accela Citizen Access Portal for "Electrical Permit – Commercial."	City of Oakland Planning & Building Department: Apply for an Electrical Permit
3. Secure Permit & Conduct Electrical Work	The electrician obtains a permit number and inspection card; complete installation per approved plans.	City of Oakland Planning & Building Department: Apply for an Electrical Permit
4. Schedule Inspection	Book an inspection once heaters and wiring are installed; most inspections occur within 2–3 business days.	Oakland Fire Prevention Bureau: Permits & Inspections
4. Schedule Inspection	Required for propane or fuel-fired heaters and for electric heaters located in enclosed or high-occupancy patio areas.	Fire Prevention Bureau
5. Install Heaters	Follow manufacturer instructions; keep permit documents on-site.	Business owner / Electrician

4. Pro Tips

- Use dedicated circuits for each heater or per manufacturer load guidelines.
- Only use outdoor-rated cords and fittings.
- Combine heaters under a single permit if installed simultaneously.
- Plan early; Oakland's electronic permitting can take 3–5 business days for review.
- Maintain documentation on-site for inspectors and insurance verification.

Compiled from City of Oakland Planning & Building Department (2025), City of Oakland Fire Prevention Bureau (2025), California Electrical Code (2025 ed.)
This is general information, not legal advice.