University of Missouri

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH & SAFETY

**Solid Alcohol (Sterno) Fuel Use Guidelines – University Policy**

Solid alcohol (Sterno) heating of food is permitted provided that the following precautions are taken to

prevent ignition of combustible material and ensures the safety of occupants.

* Sterno use is permitted in public space (i.e. Public Assembly Space, meeting rooms, etc.) only, it

is not permitted in private office space, amphitheaters, sleeping areas, or other non-public space. The space must also have a current [Open Flame Permit](http://ehs.missouri.edu/fire/), issued by Environmental Health and Safety.

* Outside food vendors shall be allowed to utilize sterno heating devices, providing they comply

with the Solid Alcohol (Sterno) Fuel Use Guidelines of The University of Missouri. Vendors shall be provided a copy of this policy and upon request shall provide written certification that their

employees are properly trained in the lighting and handling of sterno as well as the knowledge of how to operate a fire extinguisher.

* Sterno fuel use shall be attended at all times by a member of the catering staff who has been

trained in sterno use and fire safety. If a non-catered event, an organizer must be designated as a “Firewatch” to ensure this policy is being complied with.

* A minimum 2A10BC dry chemical extinguisher, or Type K extinguisher, shall be available within

seventy-five (75) feet of the serving table or tables.

* Use of secondary containers for sterno, i.e. fuel holders with cover, is mandatory. Proper tools

must be available for the smothering of the flame if needed, i.e. snuffer paddle.

* All chafing racks and beverage urns using sterno shall be placed on non-combustible mats,

ceramic or metal trays extending at least eight inches beyond the sterno container in each

direction, to prevent accidental contact with any combustible materials.

* Sterno shall be placed under food or beverage tray before lighting. Sterno shall only be lit by

means of a butane lighter or long handled match. Chafing racks or beverage urns shall not be

moved while sterno are lit.

* Only regular cloth table covers shall be used, paper or plastic table coverings are not permitted.

Table decorations must be flame resistant. Combustible material such as plates, napkins, plastic

utensils, cups and similar products shall be separated by a minimum of three feet from sterno.

* Sterno must be immediately extinguished when the food tray is empty or no longer used. When

the event is over, all sterno must be extinguished, immediately capped and removed from

facility.

* Prior to discarding Sterno, place the original lid back on the container and allow to completely cool before placing in an approved trash receptacle.
* The managing staff of the appropriate facility shall be notified of all sterno usage within their

respective buildings.

* In the event of a fire, University of Missouri Emergency Procedures Policy shall be followed. Public Safety shall be immediately notified by dialing 9-1-1.