

Fire Safety Tips for Barbecue Grills

Stovetop and oven fires are not the only types of cooking fires. As the weather gets warmer, more people will begin to use barbecue grills. While many of the safety tips are similar to indoor cooking, there are special concerns with barbecue grills.

- Position the grill well away from siding and deck railings and out from under eaves and overhanging branches.
- Place the grill a safe distance from lawn games, play areas, and foot traffic.
- Keep children and pets away from the grill area by declaring a 3-foot “kid-free zone” around the grill.
- Put out several long-handled grilling tools to give the chef plenty of clearance from heat and flames when cooking food.
- Periodically remove grease and fat buildup in trays below the grill so it cannot be ignited by a hot grill.
- **Use only outdoors!** If used indoors, or in any enclosed spaces such as tents, barbecue grills pose both fire and carbon monoxide hazards.

Charcoal Grills

- Purchase the proper starter fluid and store it out of reach of children and away from heat sources.
- Never add charcoal starter fluid when coals or kindling have already been ignited, and never use any flammable or combustible liquid other than charcoal starter fluid to get the fire going.

Propane Grills

- Check the propane cylinder hose for leaks before using it for the first time each year.
- If you smell gas while cooking, immediately get away from the grill and call the fire department. Do not attempt to move the grill.
- All propane cylinders manufactured after April 2002 must have overfill protection devices (OPD). OPD devices are easily identified by their triangular-shaped hand wheel.
- Use only equipment bearing the mark of a recognized testing laboratory, such as Underwriters Laboratories. Follow the manufacturer’s instructions on how to set up the grill and maintain it.
- Never store propane cylinders in buildings or garages. If you store a gas grill inside during the winter, disconnect the cylinder and leave it outside.