

## Safety Tips for Gas and Charcoal Grills

As the summer barbeque season approaches, it's a good time to think about grilling safety. The National Fire Protection Association reports that gas and charcoal grills cause approximately 1,500 structure fires and 4,800 outdoor fires each year. Here are some tips for keeping your cookout safe and fun:

- Position the grill a safe distance away from play areas, foot traffic, and anything that could catch fire such as exterior trim, tree branches, or eaves.
- Use long handled grilling utensils and flame-proof mitts to prevent burns.
- To reduce flare ups, keep the grill clean and trim excess fat from meats before grilling.
- Have a fire extinguisher handy.
- When you are finished cooking, keep kids away from the grill until it has completely cooled.
- Check for other gas leaks, following the manufacturer's instructions. If you detect a leak, turn off the gas immediately and don't light the grill until the leak is fixed.
- Keep cigarettes, matches and open flames away from a leaking grill.
- Do not attempt to repair a fuel tank or the grill yourself. Contact a qualified appliance repair person or a liquid petroleum gas dealer instead.
- Use caution when transporting or storing the fuel tanks. Keep the tanks in an upright position. Never leave the tanks in a hot car or trunk.

### Gas Grills

Liquid petroleum gas or propane used in gas grills is highly flammable. Each year, about 30 people are injured from gas grill fires and explosions. Many of these accidents occur after a gas grill has been left idle for some time. To reduce gas grill accidents, you should:

- Always follow the manufacturer's instructions for assembly, operation, maintenance, repair and storage of your grill.
- Check the tubes leading to the burners for any blockages from food or insects. Clean out the tubes with a pipe cleaner or wire.
- Check hoses for cracking, brittleness or leaks. Put a light solution of soap and water on the hose. If there is a leak, bubbles will form where the gas is escaping.

### Charcoal Grills

Burning charcoal produces carbon monoxide, an odorless and colorless gas. Each year about 30 people die from carbon monoxide poisoning due to charcoal grills. To reduce charcoal grill accidents, you should:

- Never use charcoal grills inside homes, tents, vehicles or campers.
- Never store a grill with freshly burnt charcoal inside because charcoal continues to produce carbon monoxide until it is totally extinguished.
- If you use lighter fluid to start the charcoal, use only fluid intended for this purpose. Do not use gasoline or other liquid combustibles which can be explosive.
- Apply the lighter fluid and put the can away before igniting the coals.
- Store lighter fluid out of reach of children and away from heat sources.

For more information, contact CTSI at 303-861-0507.

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