



Safe Outdoor Grilling

How Do Grill Fires Start and Spread?

- Improper use. Grill users increase fire risk when they use the equipment improperly, such as leaving the hot grill unattended; failing to extinguish flare-ups; using inappropriate starting fluids; and failing to follow instructions for use, care, and storage.
- Mechanical failure or malfunction. Gas grills are more prone to failure than charcoal grills; malfunctions include broken or leaking gas lines or faulty starters. Poor maintenance and inappropriate storage can cause problems or make them worse.
- Improper location of grill. Radiant heat from the hot grill can easily ignite railings, walls, floors, overhangs, plants, wall coverings, awnings, furniture, trash, and other combustible and flammable materials.

Before You Fire Up the Grill

- Follow manufacturers' directions for safe operation, storage, and maintenance of your grill.
- Be sure that the grill is in good working order. For gas grills, be sure that all gas lines and valves are intact. For charcoal grills, check for holes where ash or coals can fall through. Ensure that the grill will not tip over.
- Set up the grill in a safe place. Choose a firm, level surface at least 10 feet away from walls, siding, and deck rails; overhangs, eaves, and awnings; shrubs and branches; and furniture and other combustibles.
- Gas and charcoal grills are designed for outdoor use only. When burned, gas and charcoal produce deadly carbon monoxide, an odorless, colorless gas that can kill in a matter of minutes. Never use a grill indoors, or in a garage, even if the door is open.
- Have a fire extinguisher (ABC type) or a bucket of water handy in case of a fire.
- Have a spray bottle of water to control flare-ups.
- Have access to a phone in case of emergencies.

While You're Grilling

- Start the grill properly, using only approved methods. Before lighting a gas grill, open the cover.
- Stay by the grill while it is in use and while it is hot.
- If you smell gas while cooking: Turn off the grill. Move away from the grill. Keep everyone away. Do not move, use, or light the grill until it has been inspected and repaired.
- Use appropriate grilling tools. Choose long-handled heat-resistant tools and heat-resistant mitts.
- Keep people away from the grill, especially children.
- Clean the grill after use, removing food fragments, sauces and marinades, and fat or grease. These increase the risk of flare-ups and fires.

Special Precautions for Gas Grills

- Check the gas hoses and tubes for leaks, cracks, brittleness, holes, or kinks. Make sure there are no sharp bends in the hose or tubing. Using a pipe cleaner or wire, clear any blockages caused by dirt, insects, etc.
- Check the connections between the tank, hoses or tubes, and the burner, to ensure that they have been connected properly and completely.
- Check for gas leaks. Before using the gas grill, and especially after attaching the propane tank, apply soapy water to the hose and connections; any leaks will be made evident by the escaping bubbles. *Never use a match or lighter to look for a gas leak!*
- Test the spark igniter. Every time you activate the igniter, it should make a spark to ignite the gas.
- If the grill has a gas leak, do not use it. Contact a qualified technician for repairs before using the grill.
- Do not attempt to repair the grill. If the tank valves or connections are leaking, broken, or malfunctioning, do not attempt to repair them; contact a qualified technician or discard the unit.
- Protect the gas tubes and hoses from hot surfaces, grease, and bumps.
- Store propane gas cylinders safely. Store cylinders in an upright position; be sure that they are stored away from heat, spark, and flame; and secure them against access, theft, or tampering.
- Do not store gas cylinders inside buildings or garages. If you store your gas grill indoors, disconnect the gas cylinder and leave it outside.
- Do not store filled gas cylinders in a vehicle which might become hot. Heat will raise the tank pressure, increasing the risk of leaks through the relief valve.
- Keep flammable and combustible materials away from the grill and gas tanks.

Special Precautions for Charcoal Grills

- Use only appropriate lighter fluid, never gasoline, kerosene, or other flammable or combustible liquid.
- Never add lighter fluid to an already-lit grill. This can cause a flare-up and could ignite the fluid container.
- Dispose of ash and coals properly. Let ashes and coals cool thoroughly before disposing; douse with water if necessary. Never dump ashes on the ground, in the woods, or in a trash can or dumpster.
- Do not move the grill indoors until the coals are cold. Coals and ash will continue to produce carbon monoxide until they are completely cool.