Grillin’ and Chillin’... Do’s and Don’ts

There’s nothing like outdoor grilling. It’s one of the most popular ways to cook food. But a grill placed too close to anything that can burn is a fire hazard. Grills can be very hot, causing burn injuries. Follow these safety tips and you will be on your way to safe grilling.

DO THIS!

- Have a fire extinguisher or garden hose connected to a water supply nearby.
- Make sure your cooking site is safely placed in an open area and on a flat surface at least 10 feet from any combustible. For the record: Yes, your house totally counts as a combustible.
- Place the grill on something non-flammable like a driveway or paving stones.
- Make sure your fire is out and that the coals are "chilled." That's, like, Grilling 101, man.
- Make sure there is not a burn ban where you live.
- Check the gas tank hose for leaks if grilling with propane. If you smell gas while cooking, get away from the grill and call the fire department as soon as you can.
- Keep your grill clean and remove grease and fat from the grill and the trays below.

DON’T DO THIS!

- Never grill or barbecue on windy days. You want people to be blown away by your steaks ... not the impending doom of a giant ball of fire.
- Don't spray lighter fluid on a fire to "get it going," or you'll be "going" to the emergency room.
- Never leave a lit grill unattended or let unsupervised children near a grill.
- Never put coals in plastic, paper, or wooden containers. Also, do not dump them on the grass. Keep it classy.
- If you live in an apartment, do not grill on the porch or balcony of your unit. If you do, watch your deposit go up ... in flames!
- Never drag a lit pit behind your car or truck. Seriously. County-wide fires have started this way. Don't be that guy who sets the county on fire. No one likes that guy.
- If you want your barbeque to be the bomb, don't get bombed. Save the sauce for the meat.

Propane Grills

- Check the gas tank hose for leaks before using it for the first time each year. Apply a light soap and water solution to the hose. A propane leak will release bubbles. If your grill has a gas leak, by smell or the soapy bubble test, and there is no flame, turn off both the gas tank and the grill. If the leak stops, get the grill serviced by a professional before using it again. If the leak does not stop, call the fire department.
- If you smell gas while cooking, immediately get away from the grill and call the fire department. Do not move the grill.
- If the flame goes out, turn off the grill and gas and wait at least 5 minutes before re-lighting it.

FACTS

July is the peak month for grill fires.

Roughly half of the injuries involving grills are thermal burns.