

Serving up safety at summer barbecues

Everyone loves a barbecue! In fact, one of the great pleasures of summer is eating and cooking outside with family and friends. Unfortunately, cooking on gas and charcoal grills can also be dangerous. With a little extra precaution, you can make sure that the sizzle of summer doesn't turn into a blazing inferno.

Grilling safely with gas

Gas grills are a popular choice among today's barbecue enthusiasts. However, if not used properly they can pose a serious safety and fire hazard.

- Read the manufacturer's instructions and be sure you understand them.

Always use the proper size wrench to make sure all connections are tight.

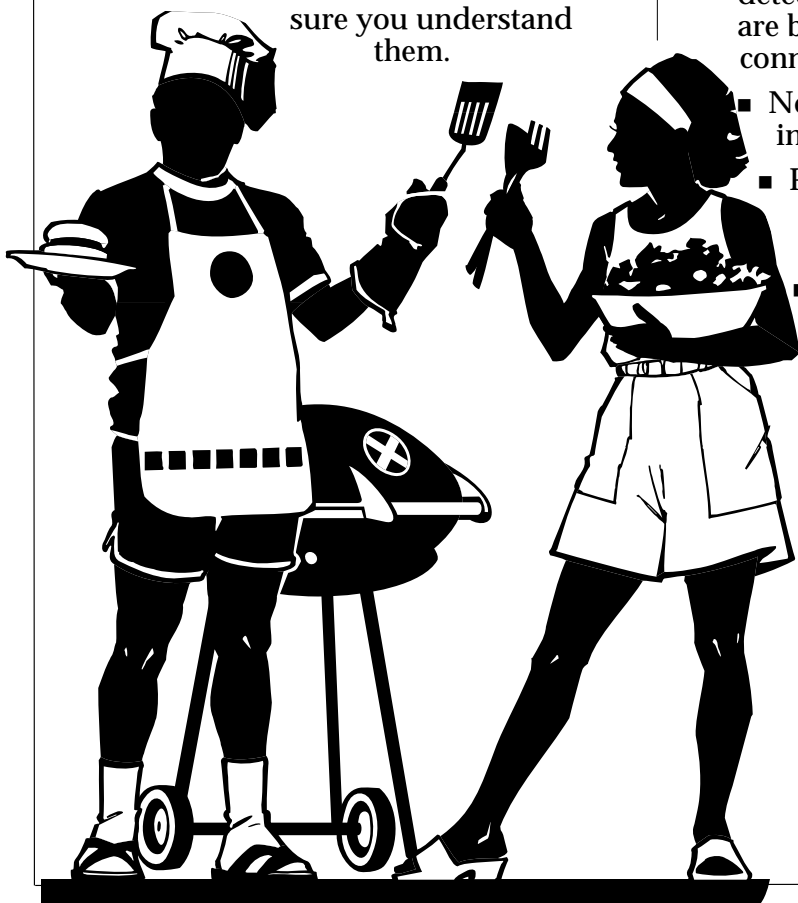
- **Remember...** fittings on gas cylinders have left-handed threads and tighten counterclockwise.
- Make sure connections are tight by applying a soapy solution to detect leaks. If there are bubbles, tighten the connection more.
- Never use a gas grill inside any structure.
- Place grills at least 15 feet away from any buildings.
- Do not allow grease to drip on the house or cylinders.
- Never let children use a gas grill.

Handle gas cylinders with care

We're sure you'll agree that any time you're dealing with a force as explosive as several sticks of dynamite, caution must be taken. The propane cylinders that are used to fuel gas grills are just this explosive. For your own safety, take the time to learn how to handle them safely.

- A filled cylinder should always be transported in an upright position on the floor of a vehicle with all windows open.
- Never transport a gas cylinder in the trunk of a car.
- Never leave a cylinder in a parked vehicle. Remove the cylinder from the vehicle as soon as possible.

(over for more info...)



- Store cylinders, and grills with cylinders attached, outdoors in a shaded, cool area out of direct sunlight. Never store the grill or spare cylinders inside, on porches or on balconies.
- Never store spare gas cylinders near the working grill.

Winterizing your gas grill

These winterizing tips will help you prolong the life of your grill and ensure years of safe operation.

- Turn off the valves on the grill burners and the propane cylinder from the grill's gas line and tape a plastic bag on the gas line opening to keep out bugs.
- Insert the attached plastic POL safety plug into the cylinder valve to keep moisture out and gas in. If your tank does not have a POL plug, ask your propane supplier to install one.
- If your grill is outside in a stationary location, it is best to store the propane cylinder along with it in its customary position.
- The burner unit can be removed from stationary grills and stored inside to prevent accumulation of rust and debris.
- Portable grills can be stored inside the garage or house, **BUT THE PROPANE TANK MUST BE LEFT OUTSIDE.** The tank

should be stored in an upright position, in a shady location, away from dryer or furnace vents and children's play areas.

- **DO NOT STORE THE CYLINDER INSIDE** the house, garage, basement or any enclosed space.
- Cover your grill when not in use -summer or winter.

Charcoal grills can be dangerous too!

Although charcoal may seem less dangerous than gas, it is just as necessary for you to take precautions.

- Never use charcoal grills in an enclosed space. The combustion of charcoal emits carbon monoxide gas which can cause death even in small quantities.
- Don't be tempted on a rainy day to use grills inside, not even in a garage or on a porch or balcony.
- Never add starter fluid once a fire has been started. Fire can follow the stream of fluid back into the container, causing an explosion and scattering flaming liquid.
- Always use great caution when disposing of ashes. They may contain live coals which can start a fire. Wet ashes thoroughly before emptying the barbecue.

- Never use your grill on a wooden deck or balcony.
- Always use your grill at least 15 feet away from any structure.

An ounce of prevention

The Howard County Department of Fire and Rescue's Bureau of Life Safety is committed to providing the best advice available for your safety. We believe that preventative education along with a professional commitment by our firefighters is your family's best defense against fire.

If you have question or would like more information about fire prevention...

CALL

The Department of
FIRE & RESCUE

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