



NEWS RELEASE

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(Discarded BBQ Ashes Cause of Tualatin Apartment Fire)

Fire investigators say improperly discarded barbecue ashes are to blame for a weekend fire in Tualatin. On Sunday, May 4, 2008, at 3:13 pm, firefighters from Tualatin Valley Fire & Rescue responded to a report of an apartment fire at 11999 SW Tualatin Road, Tualatin. The first company to arrive, Engine 35 from TVF&R's King City Fire Station, found light smoke coming from the second story of a three-story wood frame apartment building. Firefighters made a quick attack on the exterior fire and knocked down the flames within the first ten minutes. Subsequent engine companies arrived and searched the apartments on both the second and third floors and found no fire burning inside the building.

Fire Investigators collected evidence at the scene and interviewed occupants of the apartments and determined that an occupant on the third floor of the building had used a charcoal briquette barbecue in violation of the apartment rules. Investigators say the fire began on the third floor and burned through the decking material, dropping coals to and igniting the second floor deck.

The occupant told investigators that the briquette grill was used between 11:00 am and 1:00 pm on Sunday. Sometime after 1:00 pm the ashes from the grill were emptied into a paper bag and stored on the apartment's deck. The occupant and guest left the apartment and were notified later by the apartment management of the fire at their unit. No one was injured in the fire and the \$10,000 in damage was confined to the exterior of the building.

With warm and dry weather finally arriving and citizens beginning to spend more time outdoors, Tualatin Valley Fire & Rescue reminds you to use caution when operating any type of barbecue grill:

1. Always dispose of barbecue ashes in a covered metal container. Briquettes can remain hot for several days.
2. Follow all apartment complex rules regarding the types of grills allowed.
3. Never leave a barbecue unattended
4. Always have a hose, bucket of water or fire extinguisher nearby.
5. Never squirt charcoal lighter fluid on burning briquettes.
6. When changing propane tanks, check the fittings for proper seal and fit.
7. Read the Owner's Manual prior to operating a gas grill.

8. Open the lid when lighting gas barbeque burners. Wait five minutes to allow the gas to clear if it does not light.
9. Use extra caution when cooking on a wood deck.

For more information on fire and life safety tips, visit www.tvfr.com.

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