



News Release

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Fire up the Grill, Not the Patio; TVF&R Issues BBQ Safety Tips

There's nothing better than a backyard barbecue on a warm, sunny evening. Unfortunately, charcoal briquette and propane barbecues can pose a fire hazard if not used safely. Annually in the United States there are over 6,000 fires and 170 injuries due to barbecue grills. Tualatin Valley Fire & Rescue reminds individuals of the following safety tips:

- Before barbecuing place your grill away from your home and/or out from underneath a patio overhang in case of fire.
- Have a hose or bucket of water nearby in case of fire.
- Before using, inspect the hoses and fittings on your propane grill for cracks and leaks. Spray soapy water on the connections and supply lines; if it bubbles, there's a leak. Turn off the tank, re-connect the lines, and check again to ensure a tight fit.
- Only open the propane tank a quarter to one-half turn. That is all the gas a barbecue needs to operate, and if you do encounter a problem, it is quicker to shut off.
- To avoid the build-up of explosive vapors, always open the lid of your propane barbecue before lighting. If your barbecue doesn't fire up the first time you try it, shut it off, and wait five minutes so the vapors can dissipate.
- Never use gasoline to light BBQ briquettes.
- Never squirt lighter fluid on an open flame. The flame can follow the stream of lighter fluid back to the container in your hands and cause an explosive fire.
- Charcoal briquettes can remain warm enough to start a fire for several days. Wait before removing used charcoal briquettes from the barbecue. If you need to remove the briquettes before then, place them in a metal container away from combustibles or – using tongs – submerge briquettes in a pail of water.

Individuals residing in an apartment complex should check with their landlord before barbecuing. Landlords have the right to limit or prohibit the use of barbecues on patios or balconies.

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