

SUMMERTIME FIRE SAFETY TIPS

One of the greatest pleasures of summer is eating and cooking outdoors with family and friends.

The PFD urges all persons utilizing outdoor cooking equipment to follow some simple rules.

Do not wear loose fitting clothing while cooking.

Never, under any circumstances, should children (supervised or unsupervised) be allowed to start outdoor cooking equipment.

The use of barbecue grills (propane or charcoal) is permitted only at ground level (yards, patios, etc.). When in use grills should be at least 15 feet from any structure and at least 3 feet from any combustible materials.

PROPANE:

When using a gas (propane) barbecue grill, follow the manufacturer's instructions.

Make a thorough inspection of the grill before each use. Pay particular attention to all connections and hoses looking for cracking, brittleness, holes and leaks.

Damaged or corroded tanks should be replaced and not used.

Always store spare gas containers upright.

Never store a spare container under or near the grill.

Store cylinders, including those attached to barbecues, outdoors in a shaded, cool area out of direct sunlight.

Always turn off the valves when not in use.

When purchasing a gas grill, select one that bears the approval mark of an independent testing laboratory.

Do not transport LPG cylinders in the trunk of a passenger vehicle.

CHARCOAL:

Never use charcoal barbecues in an enclosed space, the carbon monoxide produced can cause injury or death.

Once a fire has been started, never add starter fluid. Fire may follow the stream of fluid back to the container, causing an explosion and scattering flaming liquid.

Always allow lighter fluid to penetrate charcoals for 5 – 10 minutes before lighting, this creates a smaller, controlled flame.

NEVER USE GASOLINE TO START YOUR FIRE.

Use caution in disposing of the ashes. Ashes may contain live coals, which can start a fire. The safest method is to wet ashes thoroughly with water before emptying the grill.

Keep a small spray can of water handy to douse flaming grease.

Don't be tempted by a rainy day to use outdoor cooking equipment inside – not even in a garage or on a porch or balcony.

LAWNMOWERS AND OTHER EQUIPMENT:

When placing the equipment in service at the beginning of the season, check the condition of the lawnmower's muffler. Hot gases from defective mufflers are often sufficient to ignite dry grass.

Never refuel your mower when the engine is running, and never refuel it inside a tool shed or garage – only outside in a well ventilated area.

Store just enough gasoline to power your lawn-care equipment.

Keep it outside the home, in a shed, for instance, in a clearly marked can approved for gasoline storage.

Never store gasoline or any flammable liquids near a heat source or flame.

Always wipe up gasoline spills. Vapors can travel along the ground and be ignited by a nearby ignition source.

Never smoke while using gasoline or gasoline powered equipment.

Always supervise youngsters when they use or are near gasoline and power tools, so they won't get burned or injured.

POOL CHEMICALS:

Liquid and solid chlorine-based oxidizers are commonly sold for home pool care as hydrogen chloride products.

These chemicals can spontaneously combust if contaminated by organic materials (such as body fluids, acid rain, etc.) or hydrocarbon liquids such as fuel oil or motor oil.

Store and use pool chemicals according to the manufacturer's recommendations.

Never store them in the home or near heat or a flame source.

Keep the containers in a dry place, well away from other items.

AIR CONDITIONERS:

Summer is a time that places heavy demands on appliances that cool the house. Remember the following tips.

When using window air conditioning units, take care not to overload circuitry.

Have the units serviced by a technician at the beginning of the season.

If a fuse blows or a circuit trips find the cause and have the problem corrected.

Since matches and candles lead to so many fires and burns, use flashlights for emergency lighting.

PEST CONTROL DEVICES:

While there have not been a significant number of reported fires attributed to Citronella Candles and Tiki Torches, the popularity of these insect repellent devices continues to grow and more people purchase them everyday.

The Philadelphia Fire Department recognizes that the potential for carelessness exists with these open flame devices and urges everyone to exercise extreme caution when using these devices.

As always, supervise children's activities when using Citronella Candles or Tiki Torches.