

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!

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.
- 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.

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 and follow the manufacturer's instructions and be sure you understand them.
- Always use the proper size wrench to make sure all connections are tight and check all washers. Apply a soapy solution to detect leaks. If there are bubbles, tighten the connection more.
- Never use a gas grill inside any building or structure
- Place grill 15 feet away from any structure.
- Do not allow grease to accumulate.
- Never let children use a gas grill.



Winterizing your gas grill

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

- Portable grills can be stored inside the garage or house. **BUT THE PROPANE TANK MUST BE STORED 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. For additional manufacturer instructions ask your propane supplier.
- **DO NOT STORE THE CYLINDER INSIDE** the house, garage, basement of any enclosed space.

Grilling safely with charcoal

Charcoal may seem less dangerous than gas, but it is also necessary for you to take precautions. 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.
- Do not use grills under a over-hang, or on a wooden deck, 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 hot coals which can start a fire. Wet ashes thoroughly before emptying the grill.
- Never use charcoal grills in an enclosed space.

Grilling safely with electric

- Follow the manufacturer's recommendations for use and remember to empty the grease container often.

An ounce of prevention

The Howard County Department of Fire and Rescue Services is committed to providing fire prevention information 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 questions or would like more information about fire safety call or write the Office of the Fire Marshal.



Howard County
M A R Y L A N D

Howard County Fire
and Rescue Services

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All Howard County offices
may be called by individuals
who use TTYs through the
Maryland Relay Service 711