



GRILLING SAFETY

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As the weather gets warmer and classes winding down, it's time to celebrate! A common celebratory activity is to have some friends over, fire up the grill, and toss back some beverages. As long as the beverages are of the legal type and consumed within legal limits, you might think the party will be safe, but think again!



the grill too long, combustibles too close to the grilling device, or remnants of a charcoal fire removed from the grill and put near things that will burn easily are contributing factors for the number of structure fires where grilling is involved. And for the most part, these are all preventable by taking these precautions:

Grilling can be a dangerous activity, and here are some facts from the 2011 "Home Fires Involving Cooking Equipment Report" prepared by NFPA's Marty Ahrens:

- In 2005-2009, U.S. fire departments responded to an average of 8,200 home fires involving grills, hibachis or barbecues per year, including an average of 3,400 structure fires and 4,800 outside fires. These 8,200 fires caused an annual average of 15 civilian deaths, 120 civilian injuries and \$75 million in direct property damage.
- More than one-quarter (29%) of the home structure fires involving grills started on a courtyard, terrace or patio, 28% started on an exterior balcony or open porch, and 6% started in the kitchen.

What makes grilling so dangerous? Grills are hot and often have open flames. This is an ignition source for anything that will burn. Food left on

- Keep grilling appliances a minimum of 36 inches from combustibles (about the width of a good size beverage cooler).
- Always keep an eye on what is cooking, if you see flames or excessive smoke pushing from the grill, keep the lid closed and stay back!!!! Turn the burners off and call 911.

FACTS

- July is the peak month for grill fires.
- More than half of home grill structure fires begin on either a courtyard terrace or patio, or an exterior balcony or open porch.
- Roughly half of the injuries involving grills are thermal burns.



- If you empty charcoal from a grill or hibachi, always douse the coals with water, place them in a metal container, and cover the container.

The statistics tell us most of the grilling related structure fires started on balconies and porches. That makes sense, many folks have these appliances on their porches and balconies, after all, who wants to go down three flights to grill in the parking lot? But truth is,

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some local fire codes prohibit gas powered grills above the first or second floor of a building, because of the danger in transporting cylinders of liquefied propane gas (LPG), to the upper floors. There is a second, just as dangerous element to consider. Fires starting on exterior balconies and porches can travel up the outside of the structure and enter the attic space of a structure. There is no fire detection or suppression systems on the outside of the building to provide early warning if this is happening at 2:00 AM, and most attic spaces are not equipped with fire suppression systems. This situation allows fire to quickly gain a foothold and literally burn the roof of the building, a very difficult situation for the local fire department to contain and extinguish.

Grilling can be fun and it can be safe. Following these simple steps will reduce the risk of a catastrophic fire being your claim to fame on campus.

Additional grilling safety information can be found at:

<http://www.nfpa.org/assets/files//PDF/grillFactSheet.pdf>

or

http://www.nfpa.org/assets/files//PDF/Public%20Education/Grilling_Safety_tips.pdf

PROPANE Grills

Check the gas tank hose for leaks before using it for the first time each year. Apply a light soap and water solution to the hose. A propane leak will release bubbles. If your grill has a gas leak, by smell or the soapy bubble test, and there is no flame, turn off the gas tank and grill. If the leak stops, get the grill serviced by a professional before using it again. If the leak does not stop, call the fire department. **If you smell gas while cooking, immediately get away from the grill and call the fire department.** Do not move the grill.

Center for Campus Fire Safety Fire Fatality Statistics Year 2000 to Present

<http://www.campusfiresafety.org/firefatalitystatistics>

The Center for Campus Fire Safety (CCFS) provides basic information about fire fatalities that occurred on a university or college campus, or that occurred within the town where the campus is located. This data is collected from news sources from around the country and the accuracy of the reported data cannot be guaranteed. There are likely more fire fatalities that have occurred that were not reported as a campus fire. As more fires occur and more information is received about previous incidents, the Fire Fatality Data will be updated.

How do we define our Fire Fatality Stats?

Once fire data is received it is reviewed to determine if the victim matches the criteria as defined by CCFS as a campus related fire. This definition is as follows:

On-Campus Fire Death: Any fire death occurring on a college or university campus.

This includes academic, faculty, laboratories, physical plant, residence halls and family housing. Any person that has died in a fire located on the campus, or within 30-days of the fire is classified as an on-campus fire fatality.

Off-Campus Fire Death: Any person 18 to 25 years of age enrolled as a student at an institution of higher learning and died in a residential dwelling unit fire that is located 3-miles or less from a campus. This includes a rented house, duplex, apartment, rooming house or privately owned residence hall that was not the student's permanent (family) residence.

Greek Fire Death: Any person that died in a fire in a fraternity or sorority house.

Those not considered a campus related fire victims:

Suicide victims by fire, family members visiting or living with the student, nonstudents that live with students in off-campus housing, former students, students living with a spouse or their children in a permanent residence.