

As Summer Comes To A Close State Fire Marshal Offers Outdoor Safety Tips

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STATEWIDE - With Labor Day weekend starting today and Maryland moving into Phase 3, families across Maryland will venture outside – either to the beach or the mountains – or like many, just to their backyard. Increased outdoor activities also increase outdoor fire risks; therefore, State Fire Marshal Brian S. Geraci provides a few common-sense tips that will help Marylanders enjoy a safe holiday weekend and summer season. “These tips will help reduce the chance of a tragedy that could ruin an otherwise fun-filled time of the year,” according to the State Fire Marshal.

Outdoor Cooking Safety Tips for Gas Grills:

- Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) cylinders should always be transported in the upright position on the vehicle floor with all windows open. Never transport cylinders in the trunk of a car. Remove the cylinder from the vehicle as soon as possible.
- Ensure that all connections are tight. Check all connections with soapy water. The appearance of bubbles indicates leaks – retighten leaking connections.
- Make sure grease is not allowed to drip onto the hose or gas cylinder.
- Store the cylinder (including those attached to barbecues) outdoors in a shaded, cool area out of direct sunlight.
- Read thoroughly and follow the manufacturer’s instructions for gas grill use. Save the instructions!

Outdoor Cooking Safety Tips for Charcoal Grills:

- Use only a small amount of charcoal starter fuel. A little goes a long way! Consider using charcoal that does not require starter fuel for ignition.
- Once a fire has been started, never add starter fuel! Fire can easily follow the stream of fluid back to the container and possibly cause an explosion.
- Use great caution in disposing of ashes. Ashes may contain live coals that can start a fire if not disposed of properly. The safest method is to wet the ashes thoroughly with water before emptying the barbecue.

With any outdoor cooking equipment, never be tempted to use them inside – not even in a garage or on a porch or balcony, says the State Fire Marshal. “Charcoal grills produce carbon monoxide, an odorless, colorless, and poisonous gas that can cause injury or death even in small quantities. LPG cylinders that develop a leak indoors can be the cause of an explosion with devastating results.”

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