



*****For Immediate Release*****

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Outdoor Grilling Safety

Olympia – After a wet start to the year, the weather in the Northwest is finally starting to warm up and the time for outdoor grilling is upon us once again.

Although safe when used correctly, barbeque related fires are significant factors for both property damage and burn injuries. According to the National Fire Protection Association, on average 10,600 home fires are started each year and 19,700 patients are sent to hospital emergency rooms because of injuries involving grills.

The State Fire Marshal's Office advises residents to take steps to make this a safe barbeque season.

Setting Up:

- Ensure you check with your local fire agency about any outdoor burn restrictions or bans.
- Both propane and charcoal grills should only be used outside.
- At a minimum, keep grills 10' away from fences, exterior walls of the house, overhanging tree branches, or any other flammable materials.
- Be sure the grill is stable and level.
- Before using the grill for the first time each year check the gas cylinder hose for leaks by applying a light soap and water solution to the hose and then turning on the gas. If there is a leak, the solution will form bubbles. If you can't stop the leak yourself, have it serviced by a professional before using it.

The State Fire Marshal's Office is a Bureau of the Washington State Patrol, providing fire and life safety services to the citizens of Washington State including inspections of state licensed facilities, plan review of school construction projects, licensing of fire sprinkler contractors and pyrotechnic operators, training Washington States firefighters, and collecting emergency response data.

When Lighting:

- Whether cooking with a gas or charcoal grill always use caution when lighting.
- Always make sure your grill lid is open before lighting.
- When using charcoal, consider using a charcoal chimney starter instead of charcoal lighter fluid and never use gasoline or other flammable liquids other than lighter fluid.

When Cooking:

- Never leave a grill unattended.
- Keep a fire extinguisher nearby.
- Keep children and pets away from the grill.
- Keep long sleeves or clothing away from the grill.
- Never add charcoal starter fluid or any other flammable liquids to the fire once a charcoal grill is started.
- When finished cooking, allow the grill to cool completely before putting it away. Keep in mind this can take an hour and once completely out, coals should be disposed of in a metal container.

For more information on grilling safety, visit www.usfa.fema.gov or call (360) 596-3929.

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