



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

Captain Neil Weaver
Government and Media Relations

State Fire Marshal's Office
State Fire Marshal Chad Cross

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Contact: Deputy State Fire Marshal Gregory Baruso

Phone: (360) 596-3929

Email: fpbpio@wsp.wa.gov

Twitter: @WaFireMarshal

Outdoor Grilling Safety

Olympia – The weather in the Northwest has finally warmed up and outdoor grilling has begun in many homes throughout Washington State. Barbeque-related fires may cause significant 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.

Last year in Washington State, cooking fires that include open grills totaled 2,121 with a total loss of over 10 million dollars. 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.

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.

For more information, contact the State Fire Marshal's Office at (360) 596-3929.

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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.