



CHELAN FIRE and RESCUE

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Barbeque Safety

Hosting a barbecue should be a safe and fun experience for everyone. It is very important to keep children and pets away from any area near hot charcoal or open flames. When barbecuing, everyone present should help to keep an eye on toddlers, young children and pets to keep them safe from burn injuries. Here are some helpful tips when barbecuing.

1. Maintenance and Safety First

- Ensure that your barbecue is sound and in good working order. Make sure the cooking site for the barbecue is flat and is away from sheds, fences, overhanging branches, house siding, eaves or deck railing. Never use a grill on an apartment balcony. This can put the entire building at risk to fire.
- Never use a barbecue indoors or in tents. This is a dangerous fire hazard and can introduce high levels of carbon monoxide to the occupants.
- Keep children and outdoor games away from the cooking area. Never leave a barbecue unattended.
- Light barbeques with a long match or mechanical lighter designed for lighting barbecues. Keep all matches, lighters and barbecue lighters out of the reach of children.
- Use long-handled grilling tools to give the chef plenty of clearance from heat and flames while cooking.
- Allow the barbecue to cool before attempting to move it.

2. Charcoal Briquette Barbeques

- Always follow the manufacturer's instructions. Use only sufficient charcoal to cover the base of the barbecue to a depth of about 2 inches. Store extra charcoal in a metal container with a watertight fitted lid. Wet charcoal can spontaneously combust and start a fire.
- Use approved charcoal briquette lighter fluid only. Use the minimum quantity of lighter fluid necessary to start the charcoals on cold coals. Adding fluid to burning or hot coals can cause the entire fluid container to flash into fire and cause serious burn injuries.

- When removing the ashes from the barbeque, make sure they are cool or put them into a non-flammable container such as a metal bucket. Water may be added to the cool ashes, remembering to stay back, away from potential hot steam. Empty spent ashes onto bare garden soil-do not put ashes into garbage can or paper bag. House fires have been caused by hot ashes, which later ignited when left on a deck or porch.

3. Gas Barbeques

- Always follow the manufacturer's instructions and have the gas grill or gas cylinders repaired by a trained professional. Check connections for leaks. If you suspect a leak to the gas cylinder or pipe, brush soapy water around all joints and watch for bubbles. If you find a leaky joint, try to tighten, but do not over tighten. If ever in doubt about the integrity of your gas cylinder or valve, have it tested. Never use gas cylinders that are past their legal use date.

4. Always open the barbeque lid before turning on the gas to light.

- **When you have finished cooking with a gas barbecue**, turn off the gas cylinder before the barbecue controls, this ensures that any residue gas in the pipeline is used up. Double check to make sure the tap is turned off before changing the gas cylinder. Change gas cylinders in the open air, not in a confined space.
- **Do not keep more spare gas cylinders than you need.** Store gas cylinders outside, away from structures (Protect the gas cylinder from frost and direct sunlight). Do not store gas cylinders or barbeques with gas cylinders on them beneath the eaves of your homes or under the stairs of your home. If you are upstairs this is your means of escape from a fire.
- **When transporting your gas cylinder**, transport in the upright position, keep a window open to ventilate the inside of the vehicle. Make sure your gas cylinder is equipped with a safety plug. Never leave a gas cylinder in a closed compartment. Never smoke during refilling, reconnecting or transporting.

Our local Fire and EMS agency recommends that you consider your safety and the safety of others when you are preparing to barbeque outdoors.

If you have any questions about this subject, please call your local fire department.

Chelan Fire and Rescue; 509-682-4476
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BE SAFE WHEN YOU BARBEQUE!