



**For Immediate Release**

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**State Fire Marshal Urges Grilling Safety  
for July 4<sup>th</sup> Celebration**

JACKSON- More grilling fires occur during the month of July than any other month, and Mississippi Insurance Commissioner and State Fire Marshal Mike Chaney urges all Mississippians to use grilling safety when celebrating the Fourth of July with friends and family this weekend.

“Take extra care with your grill this year; you want to celebrate the Fourth with your family, not in the emergency room,” Chaney said.

The National Fire Protection Association reports that gas grills pose a greater risk of fire, having been involved in an annual average of 7,200 home fires in 2007-2011, while charcoal or other solid-fueled grills were involved in an annual average of 1,400 home fires.

Between 2007 and 2011, more than one-quarter (27%) of home structure fires involving grills started on a courtyard, terrace or patio, 29% started on an exterior balcony or open porch, and 6% started in the kitchen. In almost half (43%) of the home outdoor fires in which grills were involved, half (51%) of the outside gas grills, and 29% of gas grill structure fires, the fire started when a flammable or combustible gas or liquid caught fire.

“The most dangerous time around a grill is when you light it,” Chaney said.

To help keep your family safe during this Fourth of July Holiday period, the Mississippi State Fire Marshal's Office, recommends these grilling safety tips:

- Propane and charcoal BBQ grills should only be used outdoors.
- The grill should be placed well away from the home, deck railings and out from under eaves and overhanging branches.
- Keep children and pets away from the grill area.
- Keep your grill clean by removing grease or fat buildup from the grills and in trays below the grill.
- Never leave your grill unattended.

### **Charcoal grills**

- There are several ways to get the charcoal ready to use. Charcoal chimney starters allow you to start the charcoal using newspaper as a fuel.
- If you use a starter fluid, use only charcoal starter fluid. Never add charcoal fluid or any other flammable liquids to the fire.
- Keep charcoal fluid out of the reach of children and away from heat sources.
- There are also electric charcoal starters, which do not use fire. Be sure to use an extension cord approved for outdoor use.
- When you are finished grilling, let the coals completely cool before disposing in a metal container.

### **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, 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.

For more fire safety tips visit the State Fire Marshal page of the Mississippi Insurance Department website at: [www.mid.ms.gov](http://www.mid.ms.gov). or get tips on Twitter from @msfiresafe and @MSInsuranceDept.

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