



MISSISSIPPI STATE FIRE MARSHAL

MIKE CHANEY
State Fire Marshal

PRESS RELEASE

Media Contact:

Donna Cromeans

601-359-3569

Donna.Cromeans@mid.ms.gov

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State Fire Marshal Says Grill Smart for a Safe July 4th Celebration

JACKSON- If you are one of the 86% of the households in the United States that owns at least one outdoor BBQ grill or smoker, don't let your home become one of the 8,800 burned annually by a fire started by a grill. With July being the peak month for grilling fires, and the July 4th holiday near, Mississippi Insurance Commissioner and State Fire Marshal Mike Chaney urges all Mississippians to play it smart and use grilling safety when celebrating.

“Celebrate the Fourth with your family this year, not in the emergency room because you were careless when grilling,” 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.

The National Fire Protection Association reports that nearly 17,000 patients went to the emergency room in 2012 because of injuries involving grills, including 7,400 thermal burns.

“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. or get tips on Twitter from @msfiresafe and @MSInsuranceDept.

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