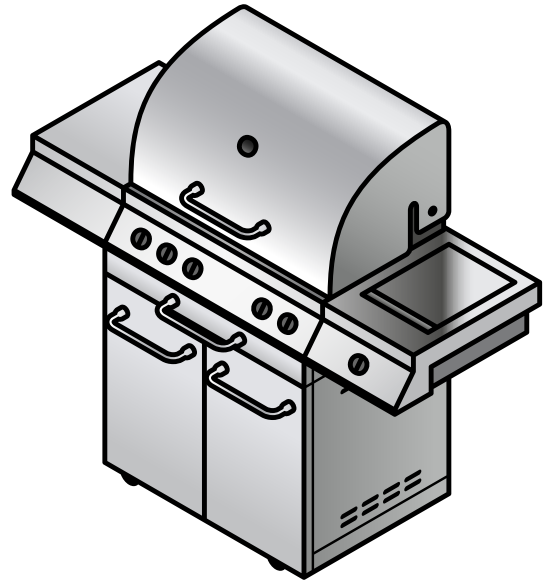


# Grilling Safety



*Many people enjoy barbecuing in the summer months. But when grills are not used safely, things can go horribly wrong. Between 2013 and 2017 Massachusetts fire departments responded to 480 fires involving grills, hibachis, and barbecues. These fires caused 19 civilian injuries, three firefighter injuries, and \$3.3 million in property damage. For safe grilling, always follow your owner's manual and practice the safety tips provided here.*

## Safety First

- Always grill outdoors.
- Grills cannot be used on a porch, balcony or deck with a roof, overhang or wall (other than the exterior of the building).
- Grills can only be used on open first floor porches, decks or patios if there is an outdoor stairway to the ground, or the porch is at ground level.
- Grills must be 10-feet from the side of a building unless the manufacturer's instructions say it can be closer. Make sure grills are not underneath overhanging branches.
- Grills cannot be used on fire escapes.
- Place grills away from the house and deck railings.
- Keep all matches, lighters and lighter fluid away from children.
- Keep children and pets three feet away from grills. Children should never play near grills or propane cylinders.

## Gas Grill Safety

Gas grills are safe and convenient when they are assembled and used properly. Gas grills are fueled by liquid propane which is pressurized and requires special handling and storage. Read and follow manufacturer's instructions.

### Safe Cooking

- Make sure that the lid of a gas grill is open when you light it. Propane can build up inside and when ignited, the lid may blow off.
- If you smell gas while cooking, turn off and get away from the grill. Call 911 from a safe location. Do not move the grill.
- Always turn off the burners and close the propane cylinder when done cooking.
- Never leave a burning grill unattended.

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## Handling Propane

- Keep all propane outdoors, at least 10 feet away from building openings such as doors, windows and dryer vents, and 20 feet away from air intake vents and ignition sources.
- Do not smoke while handling a propane cylinder.
- Propane storage: store cylinders upright in an outdoor, shaded area; do not leave cylinders in a vehicle; cylinders should not be used, stored, or transported where they can be exposed to high temperatures.

Source: National Propane Gas Association/Propane Education & Research Council (2003)

## Gas Grill Care and Maintenance

Follow the instructions in your owner's manual for the care and maintenance of your gas grill.

- Check that all connections are tight before turning on the gas.
- Leaks can be detected by dabbing the connections with a solution of soapy water and turning on the gas momentarily. If bubbles occur, there is a leak that must be fixed before the grill is used. Do not use matches or lighters to check for leaks.
- Check the tubes to the burners for blockages resulting from insect nests or from grease. Use a pipe cleaner or wire to clear blockages.
- Clean the grease trap every time you grill.
- Take tanks and grills that need repair to a propane dealer or a qualified appliance repair person.
- Replace propane cylinders that are old, rusty, or showing any other signs of disrepair.

## Charcoal Grills

Propane is the most common grilling fuel, but many people use charcoal grills. Here are some charcoal grill safety tips:

- Use only charcoal starter fluid. Gasoline and kerosene should not be used to start a fire in a grill. Never add lighter fluid to burning briquettes or hot coals. Doing so may cause a flash fire and result in serious burn injuries.
- Charcoal briquettes give off carbon monoxide, a colorless, odorless gas that can be deadly. Always use charcoal grills in a well-ventilated area. Never use charcoal grills indoors.
- For proper disposal of grill ashes, allow the coals to burn out completely and then cool for 48 hours before disposal.
- If you must dispose of ashes before they are completely cooled, thoroughly soak them in water before putting them in a metal container.

