

Outdoor Cooking Safety Tips

Charcoal Grill Safety Tips

Each year, there are about 20 deaths from carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning and more than 300 emergency room treated injuries from CO poisoning resulting from charcoal grills. Charcoal produces CO when burned. CO is a colorless, odorless gas that can accumulate to toxic levels in closed environments. To reduce these CO poisonings, CPSC is offering the following safety tips:

- **Never burn charcoal inside of homes, vehicles, tents, or campers.**
- **Charcoal should never be used indoors, even if ventilation is provided.**
- **Since charcoal produces CO until the charcoal is completely extinguished, do not store the grill indoors with freshly used coals.**

Gas Grill Safety Tips

Liquid petroleum (LP) gas or propane, used in gas grills, is extremely flammable. Each year more than 500 fires occur when people use gas grills and about 20 people are injured as a result of gas grill fires and explosions. Many of these fires and explosions occur when consumers first use a grill that has been left idle for a period of time or just after refilling and reattaching the grill's gas container.

To reduce these risks, consumers should:

- **Check the tubes that lead into the burner for any blockage from insects, spiders, or food grease. Use a pipe cleaner or wire to clear blockage and push it through to the main part of the burner.**
- **Check grill hoses for cracking, brittleness, holes, and leaks. Make sure there are no sharp bends in the hose or tubing.**
- **Move gas hoses as far away as possible from hot surfaces and dripping hot grease. If you can't move the hoses, install a heat shield to protect them.**
- **Replace scratched or nicked connectors, which can eventually leak gas.**
- **If you detect a gas leak, immediately turn off the gas at the tank and don't attempt to light the grill until the leak is fixed.**
- **Keep lighted cigarettes, matches, or open flames away from a leaking grill.**
- **Never use a grill indoors. Use the grill at least 10 feet away from any building. Do not use the grill in a garage, carport, porch, or under a surface that can catch fire.**
- **When lighting the grill, keep the top open. If the grill does not light in first several attempts, wait 5 minutes to allow gas to dissipate.**
- **Never attempt to repair the tank valve or the appliance yourself. See an LP gas dealer or a qualified appliance repair person.**
- **Consumers should use caution when storing LP gas containers. Always keep containers upright. Never store a spare gas container under or near the grill. Never store a full container indoors. Never store or use flammable liquids, like gasoline, near the grill.**
- **To avoid incidents while transporting LP gas containers, consumers should transport the container in a**

secure, upright position. Never keep a filled container in a hot car or car trunk. Heat will cause the gas pressure to increase, causing the relief valve to open and allowing gas to escape.

CPSC worked with the industry to develop a new voluntary standard to prevent LP gas leaks. Grills meeting this standard will shut themselves off if a gas leak occurs.

Product Safety Tips:

Turkey Fryers



A longtime food favorite in the southern United States, the delicious deep-fried turkey has quickly grown in popularity thanks to celebrity chefs such as Martha Stewart and Emeril Lagasse. While some people rave about this tasty creation, Underwriters Laboratories Inc.'s (UL) safety experts are concerned that backyard chefs may be sacrificing safety for good taste.

"We're worried by the increasing reports of fires related with turkey fryer use," says John Drengenberg, UL consumer affairs manager. "Based on our test findings, the fryers used to produce those great-tasting birds are not worth the risks. And, as a result of these tests, UL has decided not to certify any turkey fryers with our trusted UL Mark."

Here's why using a deep-fryer can be dangerous:

- Many units easily tip over, spilling the hot oil within the cooking pot.
- If the cooking pot is overfilled with oil, the oil may spill out of the unit when the turkey is placed into the cooking pot. Oil may hit the burner/flames causing a fire to engulf the entire unit.
- Partially frozen turkeys placed into the fryer can cause a spillover effect. This too, may result in an extensive fire.
- With no thermostat controls, the units also have the potential to overheat the oil to the point of combustion.
- The sides of the cooking pot, lid and pot handles get dangerously hot, posing severe burn hazards.

- If you absolutely must use a turkey fryer, here are some tips for safer use:
- Turkey fryers should always be used outdoors a safe distance from buildings and any other material that can burn.
- Never use turkey fryers on wooden decks or in garages.
- Make sure the fryers are used on a flat surface to reduce accidental tipping.
- Never leave the fryer unattended. Most units do not have thermostat controls. If you don't watch the fryer carefully, the oil will continue to heat until it catches fire.
- Never let children or pets near the fryer when in use. Even after use, never allow children or pets near the turkey fryer. The oil inside the cooking pot can remain dangerously hot, hours after use.
- To avoid oil spillover, do not overfill the fryer.
- Use well-insulated potholders or oven mitts when touching pot or lid handles. If possible, wear safety goggles to protect your eyes from oil splatter.
- Make sure the turkey is completely thawed and be careful with marinades. Oil and water don't mix, and water causes oil to spill over, causing a fire or even an explosion hazard.
- The National Turkey Federation recommends refrigerator thawing and to allow approximately 24 hours for every five pounds of bird thawed in the refrigerator.
- Keep an all-purpose fire extinguisher nearby. Never use water to extinguish a grease fire. Remember to use your best judgement when attempting to fight a fire. If the fire is manageable, use an all-purpose fire extinguisher. If the fire increases, immediately call 9-1-1 for help.
- Even after use, never allow children or pets near the turkey fryer. The oil inside the cooking pots remains dangerously hot, hours after use.