



# LOSS CONTROL TECHNICAL BULLETIN

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2800

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## OUTDOOR GRILLING SAFEGUARDS



### Background

This Loss Control Technical Bulletin #2800 provides risk managers with outdoor grilling guidelines to be considered.

### ACCIDENT FACTS:

Each year more than 500 fires occur when people use gas grills. <sup>1</sup> Charcoal grills are involved in approximately 20 deaths annually and 300 emergency room treated injuries due to carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning. <sup>2</sup>

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. <sup>1</sup> **The use of gas-fired and charcoal grills within residential cluster communities represents a significant property exposure.** ALWAYS KEEP A FIRE EXTINGUISHER ON HAND WHEN GRILLING. KEEP ALL GRILLS AWAY FROM BUILDINGS, OFF DECKS AND BALCONIES.

### RECOMMENDATIONS:

#### PORTABLE GRILLS:

Maintain a *minimum* 10-foot Separation. As a rule – maintain ten feet horizontally and ten feet vertically



Grills are not recommended to be stored or used on ANY deck or balcony.

Portable grills include:

- propane gas grills
- natural gas grills
- charcoal grills
- hibachis
- smokers or any appliance which uses an open flame to cook



Recommend maintaining a **10 foot minimum separation** (vertically and horizontally) from all buildings and/or other combustible materials (pine straw, pine bark, and other combustible landscaping materials).

Tiki Torches – Maintain torches per above. No torches within 10 foot sphere of exterior is recommended

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### Charcoal Grill Safety Tips:

- **Never use a charcoal grill indoors. Never use a charcoal grill on decks or balconies. Be aware of carbon monoxide dangers!** 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.
  - Instant lighting briquette - spread them in a single layer so they touch at the edges. Don't apply lighter fluid, light several briquettes at their edges.
  - Stack standard 'briquettes' into a pyramid. Light with fluid, electric or chimney charcoal starters.
  - Electric starters - check to see that the cord's insulating cover is in good condition, make sure that the cord does not create a tripping hazard, and do not use it if it's raining or if the ground is wet.
  - Lighter fluid - apply and let soak in for at least a minute before lighting. Never apply lighter fluid to lit coals. Use charcoal lighter fluids, never use gasoline!
  - Time to cook - Coals are ready when they appear ash gray in daylight or glowing red at night.
  - Ensure coals are extinguished prior to disposal. **ALWAYS KEEP A FIRE EXTINGUISHER ON HAND.**

### Gas Grill Safety Tips:

- **Never use a gas grill indoors. Never use a gas grill on decks or balconies. 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.
- 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.
- Immediately turn off the gas at the tank, if you detect a gas leak. Don't attempt to light the grill until the leak is fixed.
- Keep lighted cigarettes, matches, or open flames away from a leaking grill.
- 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 a liquefied petroleum (LP) gas dealer or a qualified appliance repair person.
- Exercise extreme caution when storing LP gas containers. Always keep containers upright. **Never store a spare gas container (tank) under or near the grill. Never store tanks indoors. Never store or use flammable liquids, like gasoline, near the grill.**

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### Gas Grill Safety Tips: - continued

- Transport the container in a secure, upright position to avoid incidents while transporting LP gas containers. 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.

### RECOMMENDATIONS:

#### STATIONARY GRILLS:

Maintain a *minimum* 15-foot separation. As a rule – maintain fifteen feet horizontally and fifteen feet vertically

Stationary grills are:



EXAMPLES OF STATIONARY GRILLS FOR A COMMUNITY GRILL PIT

### Summary

This standard conforms to the underwriting practices of the Philadelphia Insurance Companies and is not intended to address or conform to various state or local codes governing a specific jurisdiction. Local ordinance codes also contain information on the grilling restrictions for your residential property. These codes should also be used as additional reference sources.

### References

1. CPSC Release dated July 1, 1999: <http://www.cpsc.gov/cpscpub/prerele/prhtml98/98113.html>
2. AHA American Homeowners Association: <http://www.ahamembership.com/mem/resources/univ/090599.cfm>

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