

*For Immediate Release*June XX, 2019

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**This Grilling Season, Make Sure it’s Only the Food That Gets Barbequed!**

There’s nothing like grilling your meals outside on a warm summer day! The taste of grilled meats and vegetables can’t be recreated anywhere else. However, grilling safety should be an important part of your outdoor cooking plans! Grill fires on residential properties result in an estimated average of 10 deaths, 100 injuries, and $37 million in property loss each year according to the U.S. Fire Administration (USFA).

Propane is the power source in 69 percent of all grill fires on residential properties according to the USFA. If using a propane grill, when is the last time you checked to make sure the connections are secure and the hoses are in good condition? According to the USFA leaks or breaks of containers or pipes account for 23 percent of all grill fires on residential properties. What about the integrity of the tank? Here’s some great advice from the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) on how to make sure your propane grill is fire safe and operating efficiently:

* 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, by smell or the soapy bubble test, and there is no flame, turn off both the gas tank and the 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.
	+ If the flame goes out, turn the grill and gas off and wait at least 5 minutes before re-lighting it.

The NFPA also advises that charcoal grills also need to be used in a manner that reduces the risk of fire and burn injury. Charcoal chimney starters allow you to start the charcoal using newspaper as a fuel. They contain the fire and reduce the risk of embers escaping and potentially starting a fire on or near your home. 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. If using one of these devices, be sure to use an extension cord for outdoor use.

Whether using propane or charcoal, placement of your grill is just as important as having it in proper working order. Outdoors means outdoors! Never grill in a garage, shed or anywhere in your home. Grills should be placed at least 10 feet from any structures. Make sure the spot you choose is level to prevent the grill from tipping or falling over. The grill should be placed well away from the home, deck railings and out from under eaves and overhanging branches. Once you light the fire, watch it! Never leave a grill unattended. Flare ups can occur in seconds. Children and pets should be kept well away from the grilling area.

After you are done grilling, and the grill has cooled down, clean it! Don’t forget about the grease trays! They should be emptied and cleaned after each use. Avoiding grease build up means avoiding the potential for fire. For charcoal grills, be sure to let the coals completely cool before disposing in a metal container.

Heeding a few simple tips will ensure your family and home will be safe from fire while enjoying all the upcoming summer season has to offer, including the taste of homecooked barbeque! Dig in!

Insert your Department name relies on brave men and women to volunteer their time to serve as volunteer firefighters to ensure that every call for help is answered. Men and women with almost every skill set are needed. To learn more about volunteer opportunities, please contact Insert your Department name at Insert website or call Insert your Dept. phone number.

There are volunteer opportunities at your local volunteer fire department for citizens willing to work hard. To learn more about becoming a volunteer firefighter and joining your local volunteer fire department, please visit [www.VolunteerFireTN.org](http://www.VolunteerFireTN.org).

*About the Tennessee Fire Chiefs Association, Inc. (TFCA)
The TFCA provides leadership to career and volunteer Fire Chiefs, Chief Fire Officers and managers of emergency service organizations throughout the State of Tennessee through vision, information, education, service and representation to enhance their knowledge, skills, and abilities. The TN Fire Chiefs Association (TFCA) also encourages the professional advancement of the fire service to ensure and maintain greater protection of life and property from fire and natural or man-made disasters. The TFCA’s mission is to provide leadership to career and volunteer chiefs, chief fire officers, and managers of Emergency Service Organizations throughout the State of Tennessee through vision, information, education, service and representation to enhance their professionalism and capabilities. More information about the TFCA is located at* [*www.tnfirechiefs.com*](http://www.tnfirechiefs.com) *.*

*About Volunteer Workforce Solutions (VWS)
The Tennessee Fire Chiefs Association was awarded a SAFER recruitment and retention grant in 2016 and partnered with the International Association of Fire Chiefs to identify recruitment and retention goals, strategies and marketing methodologies that would benefit not only participating departments, but all fire departments in the state. 19 departmental groups, consisting of 64 departments, were selected to participate in Phase I of the program. The VWS program is also operating in Virginia through the Virginia Fire Chiefs Association and Connecticut through the Connecticut Fire Chiefs Association. There is also currently a National VWS effort focusing on diversity and new trainings. More information about the Tennessee VWS can be found at* [*www.VolunteerFireTN.org*](http://www.VolunteerFireTN.org)*.*

*(Insert info about your department in similar format to above)*