



Enjoy your summer without getting burned

Summer is a carefree time when most of us are thinking about fun in the sun with our families—swimming, barbecuing, camping or boating. You may not realize it also is an important time to remember fire safety guidelines that will keep you and your family enjoying the lazy, hazy, crazy days of summer.

Can my barbecue grill pose a threat?

Yes! Keep your grill far from anything that can burn—your house, car or dry vegetation. Be sure you stay with the grill while it is lit and take care to keep children and pets away from the area. If you're operating the grill for the cookout, be sure you are wearing a heavy apron and oven mitts to keep yourself safe from burns.

If you're using a gas grill, always store the fuel container outdoors and turn off the valves when not in use. Check frequently for leaks in connections by using a soap and water mixture that will show bubbles if gas escapes. For charcoal grills, only use starter fluids designed for grills and only use a limited amount. If the fire is too slow, rekindle with dry kindling and add more charcoal, if necessary. Don't add liquid fuel to reignite or build up a fire. Soak the coals with water before you discard them and leave the grill away from the house until completely cool.

What is the safest way to store gasoline?

Store gasoline outside the home, preferably in a locked, detached shed. Make sure it is kept in a container approved for gasoline storage and is labeled clearly. Keep the container away from any heat source or flame.

Are there any fire safety issues I should know about while boating?

Boating can be a fun, relaxing—and safe—activity for the entire family when observing certain safety guidelines. Before fueling your boat, make sure to extinguish smoking materials and shut down all motors, fans and heating devices. Don't fill the tank to capacity—leave room for expansion. Wipe up all fuel spills immediately and check the bilge for fuel leakage and odors. Ventilate the area for five minutes before starting the motor. If you have a covered boat, consider installing a smoke detector and testing it before each trip in the boat. Be sure to only use portable stoves and heaters specifically designed for marine use.

What fire safety issues should I keep in mind while camping?

Many families enjoy the tradition of a yearly camping trip. Because these events often occur in wooded areas, and many people are focused on fun rather than safety, they can pose a real danger in terms of fire. There is much you can do to keep your family safe during your next camping trip.

Build your campfire downwind, clearing away all dry vegetation and digging a pit surrounded by rocks. Store liquid fire starter—*never* gasoline—away from your tent and campfire and use only dry kindling to freshen a campfire, not liquid fuel.

Pitch your flame-retardant tent well away from the campfire. Only use flashlights or battery-powered lanterns inside the tent. Not only can liquid-fueled heaters and lanterns pose a fire threat, they also can pose the threat of carbon monoxide poisoning. Also, be sure not to permit anyone to smoke inside a tent. Fully extinguish your fire.

