

Summer Fire Safety

Every year Americans look forward to summer vacations, camping, family reunions, picnics, and the Fourth of July. Summertime, however, also brings fires and injuries due to fireworks and outdoor grills. Annually just under 10,000 Americans are injured by fireworks and almost 5,000 are injured by charcoal/wood-burning and propane grill fires. In 2007, 64 percent of fireworks injuries occurred between June 22 and July 22.

Families also enjoy camping in the summer. It is important to follow the park's rules for the use and extinguishing of campfires.

Summertime should be a time for fun and making happy memories. Knowing a few fire safety tips and following instructions will help everyone have a safe summer.

Fireworks Safety

The best way to enjoy fireworks is to visit public fireworks displays put on by professionals who know how to safely handle fireworks.

If you plan to use fireworks, make sure they are legal in your area.

Never light fireworks indoors or near dry grass.

Always have a bucket of water and/or a fire extinguisher nearby. Know how to operate the fire extinguisher properly.

Do not wear loose clothing while using fireworks.

Stand several feet away from lit fireworks. If a device does not go off, do not stand over it to investigate it. Put it out with water and dispose of it.

Always read the directions and warning labels on fireworks. If a device is not marked with the contents, direction and a warning label, do not light it.

Supervise children around fireworks at all times.

Barbecue Safety

Before using a grill, check the connection between the propane tank and the fuel line. Make sure the venturi tubes - where the air and gas mix - are not blocked.

Do not overfill the propane tank.

Do not wear loose clothing while cooking at a barbecue.

Be careful when using lighter fluid. Do not add fluid to an already lit fire because the flame can flashback up into the container and explode.

Keep all matches and lighters away from children. Teach your children to report any loose matches or lighters to an adult immediately. Supervise children around outdoor grills.

Dispose of hot coals properly - douse them with plenty of water, and stir them to ensure that the fire is out. Never place them in plastic, paper or wooden containers.

Never grill/barbecue in enclosed areas - carbon monoxide could be produced.

Make sure everyone knows to Stop, Drop and Roll in case a piece of clothing does catch fire. Call 911 or your local emergency number if a burn warrants serious medical attention.

Campfire Safety

Build campfires where they will not spread, away from dry grass and leaves.

Keep campfires small, and don't let them get out of hand.

Keep plenty of water and a shovel around to douse the fire when you're done. Stir it and douse it again with water.

Never leave campfires unattended.

Information taken from the U.S. Fire Administration, Department of Homeland Security website, www.usfa.dhs.gov