



# GRILL SAFETY

Your grilling experience should yield delicious food—not create risky situations. Following basic safety guidelines will help make sure you are managing the risk associated with using grills.

## Perform Maintenance Checks

Ensure grills are cleaned and maintenance checks are completed before grills are used for the first time each year.

- Check the tubes leading into the burner for any blockage from insects, spiders, etc.
- Check the grill hoses for cracking, brittleness, holes, and leaks. Make sure there are no sharp bends in the hoses or tubing.
- Replace scratched or nicked connectors.
- Check the propane tanks for problems and to ensure they are filled.
- Don't forget that grills do not last forever. Use your maintenance checks as an opportunity to assess the need to replace the grill.

## Keep the Grill in a Safe Place

- The grill should be placed on a stable, even surface that is well ventilated and not underneath hanging branches.
- Never use a grill indoors.
- Use the grill at least 10 feet away from the house or any building.
- Do not use the grill in a garage, porch, or under a surface that can catch fire.

## Know How to Use the Grill

- Staff should be trained in advance how to use the grill safely. If a staff member has not received training and demonstrated a good understanding of how the grill works, they should not operate the grill.
- The grill should be monitored by staff at all times while in use and until it is cool.
- Do not lean over the grill when igniting the burners or cooking.
- Keep a fire extinguisher accessible.
- Use long-handled grill utensils that will allow you to be a safe distance from the grill while cooking.
- Do not wear loose clothing while cooking at the grill.
- Do not attempt to move the grill while it is either still in use or still hot.
- Do not use aerosol cans around the grill as these may be flammable.
- If there are any problems with the grill, discontinue use until the problem is resolved.

## Gas Grills

- When lighting the grill, keep the top open. If the grill does not light in the first several attempts, turn off the gas and wait 5 minutes to allow the gas to dissipate.
- If the burners go out during cooking, turn all gas valves off. Open the lid and wait 5 minutes before attempting to restart the grill.
- Always shut off the valve to the propane tank when the grill is not in use.
- When changing propane tanks, ensure the valves are in the off position.





## Charcoal Grills

Charcoal grills are a more economical choice for cooking than gas grills. They heat the food at higher temperatures than gas grills and will add a unique smoky flavor which is not found when using a gas grill.

Charcoal grills versus gas grills tend to take longer to heat up and will take more steps to get them going.

- When using a charcoal grill it is important to take precautions.
- Charcoal grills should be filled about 2 inches deep, to cover the base of the barbecue. If you are using charcoal briquettes, place them in a pyramid shape.
- Only use a minimum amount of lighter fluid to start the grill as briquettes and coals will give off carbon monoxide.
- After putting the lighter fluid on, let it soak for a few minutes to allow the fluid to sink into the coals so that the gas can evaporate. When you are done using the lighter fluid make sure to cap the fluid and move it away from the grill.
- Only use lighter fluid when you are starting the grill. Do not use it when the coals are burning.
- Never use kerosene or gasoline to light the grill.
- When lighting the grill do not directly stand next to the grill.
- While the charcoal grill is lit do not touch the coals or briquettes.

*\*While charcoal grills provide a rich, smoky flavor to the food, they do tend to get ash on the food. This is not usually a health hazard but it might change the flavor of the food.*

## Cleaning the Grill

- Grills should be cleaned after each use. This includes removing any grease or food that may have stuck to the grilling surface and the outside of the grill.
- Upon completion of using the charcoal grill, make sure to allow the coals to burn out for the recommended time of 48 hours or soak them in water.
- When removing the coals place the cooled charcoal and ashes into a heavy duty foil and place them in a non-combustible container.

## Storing the Grill

- During the summer months when the grills are not in use, they should be covered with a plastic grill cover. This is to protect the grill from the weather. Grills should remain outside on a level area.
- At the end of the season, a maintenance check should be performed before the grill is stored. Grills should be stored indoors during the off season. Grills and propane tanks should be store separately.

Contact the ISA Risk Management Division today for more information on these and other risk management services and resources.  
Call 800-622-8272 or email [riskmanagement@siegelagency.com](mailto:riskmanagement@siegelagency.com).



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