



## Home Fires Involving Grills Fact Sheet

In 2007-2011, U.S. fire departments responded to an average of 8,800 home<sup>1</sup> fires involving grills, hibachis, or barbecues per year, including an average of 3,800 structure fires and 5,000 outside fires. These 8,800 fires caused annual average of 10 civilian deaths, 140 reported civilian injuries, and \$96 million in direct property damage.

- Almost all the losses resulted from structure fires.
- July was the peak month for grill fires but these incidents occur throughout the year.

### Gas vs. Solid-Fueled Grills

Four out of five (82%) grills involved in home fires were fueled by gas while 16% used charcoal or other solid fuel.

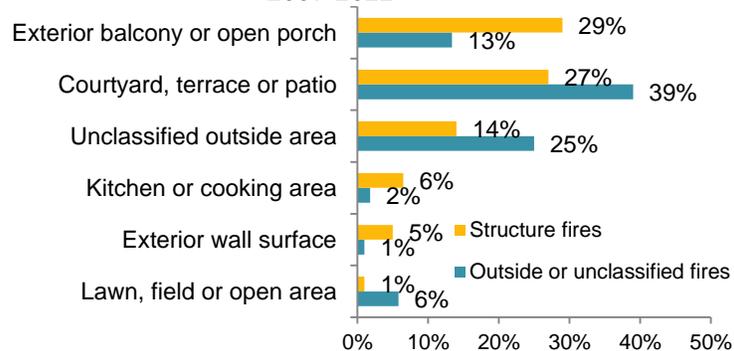
**Gas grills** were involved in an average of 7,200 home fires per year, including 3,000 structure fires and 4,200 outdoor fires annually.

- Leak or break was the leading factor contributing to gas grill fires.

**Charcoal or other solid-fueled** grills were involved in 1,400 home fires, including 600 structure fires and 700 outside fires.

- The leading cause of these structure fires was something that could burn being too close to the grill.

### Home Grill Fires by Leading Areas of Origin 2007-2011



Three out of 10 (29%) of home structure fires involving grills started on an exterior balcony or open porch;

- 27% started on or in a courtyard, terrace, or patio;
- 6% began in the kitchen; and
- 5% started on an exterior wall surface.

### Emergency Room Visits Due to Grills

In 2012, 16,900 patients went to emergency rooms because of injuries involving grills.<sup>2</sup>

Almost half (7,400) of the injuries were thermal burns.

Children under five accounted for 1,700 (37%) of the 4,500 thermal non-fire grill burns. These were typically contact burns rather than flame burns.

<sup>1</sup>Homes include one- or two-family homes, apartments, town houses, row houses, and manufactured housing.

<sup>2</sup>Data from the Consumer Product Safety Commission's National Electronic Injury Surveillance System, queried in August 2009.

## Grilling safety tips

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Fire in the grill, under hot dogs and burgers, is a welcome sight at the family cookout. But fire anywhere else can make your summer kick-off barbecue memorable for all the wrong reasons.

### Safety tips

- Propane and charcoal BBQ grills must only be used outdoors. If used indoors, or in any enclosed spaces, such as tents, they pose both a fire hazard and the risk of exposing occupants to toxic gases and potential asphyxiation.
- Position the grill well away from siding, deck railings and out from under eaves and overhanging branches.
- Place the grill a safe distance from lawn games, play areas, and foot traffic.
- Keep children and pets away from the grill area: declare a three-foot "safe zone" around the grill.
- Put out several long-handled grilling tools to give the chef plenty of clearance from heat and flames when flipping burgers.
- Periodically remove grease or fat buildup in trays below grill so it cannot be ignited by a hot grill.

### Charcoal grills

- Purchase the proper starter fluid and store the can out of reach of children, and away from heat sources.
- Never add charcoal starter fluid when coals or kindling have already been ignited, and never use any flammable or combustible liquid other than charcoal starter fluid to get the fire going.

### Propane grills

- Check the gas cylinder hose for leaks before using it for the first time each year. A light soap and water solution applied to the hose will quickly reveal escaping propane by releasing bubbles. If you determine your grill has a gas leak, by smell or the soapy bubble test, and there is no flame, turn off the gas tank and 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 attempt to move the grill.
- Use only equipment with the label of a recognized testing laboratory. Follow the manufacturers' instructions on how to set up the grill and maintain it.