

[NASCC Fire Department](#)

Topic Outdoor Grilling

With Memorial Day fast approaching NAS Corpus Christi Fire Emergency Services urges safety this weekend when you do your outdoor grilling. Each year, gas-fueled and charcoal grills are involved in thousands of home structure fires and home outdoor fires, according to National Fire Protection Association. Gas-fueled grills present a higher fire risk than charcoal grills. Nearly half of home outdoor gas grill fires and almost one-third of home gas grill structure fires are due to leaks and breaks in the equipment. The two leading causes for charcoal grill home structure fires are combustible materials, including the home itself, that are too close to the grill, and unattended cooking. Selecting a safe location outside the home for grilling is important. Almost half of all home structure charcoal grill fires and one-third of the gas grill fires began on an exterior balcony or unenclosed porch.

Outdoor Grilling

Gas 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 "kid-free 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.

Gas 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 911.
 - If you smell gas while cooking, immediately get away from the grill and call 911. Do not attempt to move the grill.
- Use only equipment bearing the mark of an independent testing laboratory. Follow the manufacturers' instructions on how to set up the grill and maintain it.
- Never store propane gas cylinders in buildings or garages. If you store a gas grill inside during the winter, disconnect the cylinder and leave it outside.