



GRILL SAFETY

Whether your barbecue uses charcoal, wood, propane, or natural gas, don't even think about firing it up until you are sure it's safe.

- Make certain that vents are clean & operable & that there are no areas that have rusted through. Embers can wreak havoc with a nearby wood pile or even your home.
- Thoroughly clean your grill each season. Grease buildup can cause a fire that cannot be easily extinguished.
- For gas grills, check & secure all gas connections. A leak can be fatal. Soapy water sprayed onto each connection & fitting will reveal an unwanted leak.
- Keep your grill at least 10 feet away from your home or other combustible surfaces.
- Don't barbecue indoors, including in a garage. You can literally suffocate every living thing in your home.
- Don't barbecue on a wood deck if there is a chance that dry grass is growing beneath it. You can start a fire that can't be easily extinguished.
- Don't use gasoline or paint thinner to start your fire. You may lose a substantial amount of hair in the process.
- Use starter fluid sensibly. Apply it to the coals & then light your fire. Don't stand next to the fire & squirt lighter fluid onto the flames.
- When using a gas grill NEVER turn the gas on with the lid closed. An accumulation of gas can result in a horrendous explosion.
- Keep children away from the grill. Each year many children & adults are burnt or injured during backyard barbecues.

Barbecue grill fires & domestic propane tank explosions are a major source of personal injury in the United States each year. According to recent statistics from the U.S. Fire Administration, a division of FEMA, some 6,500 barbecue grill fires injure Americans accounting for property loss of over \$27 million annually. Nearly 1/3 of these gas grill fires occur in the backyard on a patio or terrace, & another 1/3 of these grill fires takes place in backyards.

Here are some additional safety tips when using a propane grill:

- Always check for leaks every time you disconnect or reconnect the regulator to the LP tank. If you find a leak, immediately turn off the gas at the tank and don't attempt to light the grill until the leak is fixed. Until it is repaired, keep lit cigarettes, matches, or open flames away from it.
- Check the valve connections & hoses to be sure they are in good working order. The hoses should have no cracks, holes or leaks. Make sure there are no sharp bends in the hose or tubing.
- Check the tubes that lead into the burner for any blockage from insects, spiders, or food grease. Use a pipe cleaner or wire to clear blockage & push it through to the main part of the burner.
- Use the grill at least 10 feet away from any building. Do not use the grill in a garage, carport, porch, or under a surface that can catch fire.
- Move gas hoses as far away as possible from hot surfaces & dripping hot grease. If you can't move the hoses, install a heat shield to protect them.
- If the burner doesn't light, turn off the gas & try it again in about 5 minutes.
- When not in use, the LP tank valve must be turned to OFF. The tanks should always be stored in an upright position & in a place where the temperature will never reach 125 °F.
- Never keep a filled fuel container in a hot car or car trunk. Heat will cause the gas pressure to increase, causing the relief valve to open & allowing gas to escape.



Toolbox Talks



Summer Safety Part 1

POWER MOWER SAFETY

A power lawn mower can be dangerous & cause serious injuries. A rotary mower blade whirls at 2,000 or 4,000 revolutions per minute, or at 100 to 200 miles per hour. For safety reasons, it is important to know how to quickly disengage the clutch & stop the engine.

Safety tips when using a power mower:

- Begin by reading the operator's manual.
- Before mowing remove debris from lawn.
- Wear protective, close fitting clothing, i.e. sturdy shoes, long pants & sleeved shirts, safety glasses or goggles when mowing near solid objects.
- Start mower from a firm stance with feet in a safe position.
- Take self-propelled mowers out of gear before starting.
- Keep both feet on the footrests of a riding mower.
- Keep all guards & safety shields in place.
- Never fill the gasoline tank on the mower if the engine is hot.
- Store gasoline in an approved, properly labeled container.
- Turn off the motor before dismounting or removing a foreign object.
- Disconnect the spark or electric plug before repairing mower.
- Never use an electric mower on wet grass.
- Provide routine maintenance.
- No extra riders on self-propelled mowers.
- A mower can tip over easily.
- Push the mower away from the body during a fall.
- Never leave a running mower unattended.
- Take rest periods as needed.
- Foreign objects can fly from the mower, so make sure the mowing area is clear of people & animals.
- When mowing on a slope with a riding mower, mow down the slope.
- When mowing on a slope with a push mower, mow across the slope.



WATER & DEHYDRATION

In summer weather & other hot, humid working conditions, drinking enough water is vital to preventing heat illness. Don't drink a large quantity of water at once, just keep on sipping. Drinking water & other beverages as well as eating waterlogged produce such as lettuce supply daily your water requirements. Clear urine, a regular digestive system, & supple skin are signs of adequate fluid intake. Headache can be a sign of dehydration, so try drinking water before you pop a pill. Dehydration occurs when you lose more fluid than you take in & your body doesn't have enough water & other fluids to carry out its normal functions. If lost fluid remains unreplenished, you may suffer serious consequences.

Common causes of dehydration include intense bouts of diarrhea, vomiting, fever, or excessive sweating. Inadequate intake of water during hot weather or exercise also may deplete your body's water stores. Anyone may become dehydrated, but young children, older adults, & people with chronic illnesses are most at risk. Dehydration can be treated by replenishing the lost fluids your body has lost.

Mild dehydration can cause symptoms such as:

- Dry, sticky mouth
- Thirst
- Muscle weakness
- Headache
- Sleepiness or tiredness
- Decreased urine output
- Few or no tears when crying
- Dizziness or lightheadedness



Toolbox Talks

Summer Safety Part 2

HEAT DISORDERS: During the summer, as temperatures & humidity increase, we must all take precautions to ensure our bodies don't get over heated.

1. Heat Cramps

Heat cramps are brief, severe cramps or spasms in the muscles of the legs, arms, or abdomen that may occur during or after vigorous exercise or working in extreme heat. The sweating that occurs causes the body to lose salts & fluids. This low level of salts causes the muscles to cramp. Although painful, heat cramps aren't serious. Even though you may be drinking water or other fluids, you can still have heat cramps as it is not dehydration, it is the loss of salts & other electrolytes such as calcium from your body. Heat cramps can be very painful, but they can be treated easily with the replacement of the electrolytes & generally are not serious.

If you suffer from heat cramps you should:

- Rest briefly & cool down
- Drink clear juice or an electrolyte-containing sports drink such as Gatorade or Powerade.
- Do range-of-motion stretching & gentle massaging of the affected muscle group.

2. Heat Exhaustion

Heat exhaustion symptoms may include heavy sweating & a rapid pulse, a result of your body overheating. It's one of three heat-related syndromes, with heat cramps being the mildest & heatstroke being the most severe.

Warning signs of heat exhaustion include:

- Headaches, dizziness, lightheadedness, or fainting.
- Weakness.
- Hot, moist skin that appears flushed.
- Mood changes such as irritability or confusion.
- Upset stomach or vomiting.
- Heavy sweating

Causes of heat exhaustion include exposure to high temperatures, particularly when combined with high humidity & strenuous physical activity. Without prompt treatment, heat exhaustion can progress to heatstroke, a life-threatening condition. Fortunately, heat exhaustion is preventable.

In most cases, you can treat heat exhaustion yourself by doing the following:

- Rest in a cool place. Getting into an air-conditioned building is best, but at the least, find a shady spot. Rest on your back with your legs elevated higher than your heart level.
- Drink cool fluids. Stick to water or sports drinks. Don't drink any beverages that have alcohol or caffeine, either of which can contribute to fluid loss.
- Apply cool water to your skin. Take a cool shower or drench yourself with a water hose if possible.
- Loosen clothing. Remove any unnecessary clothing.

3. Heat Stroke

Heatstroke is a life-threatening condition that occurs when your internal body temperature reaches 104 °F or higher. Heatstroke is the escalation of two other heat-related health problems: heat cramps & heat exhaustion. You can prevent heatstroke if you receive medical attention or take self-care steps as soon as you notice a problem.

Signs of Heat Stroke are:

- High body temperature. A body temperature of 104 °F or higher is the main sign of heat stroke.
- Cessation of sweating. This is often one of the first signs that your body temperature is too high. With heat stroke brought on by hot weather, your skin is hot & dry to the touch.
- Hyperventilation. Your breathing may become rapid & shallow.
- Rapid heart rate & pulse.
- Seizures or convulsions.
- Neurological symptoms; you may have seizures, lose consciousness, slip into a coma, hallucinate, or have difficulty speaking or understanding what others are saying.

Whatever the cause, you'll need immediate medical attention to prevent brain damage, organ failure, or death.

4. Risk Factors

Factors that increase your likelihood of having a heat stress episode:

- Young or old age. Infants & children younger than 4 & adults older than 65 are at higher risk of heat exhaustion. The body's ability to regulate its temperature isn't fully developed in the young & may be inhibited by illness, medications, or other factors in older adults. Both age groups tend to have difficulty remaining hydrated, which also increases risk.
- Certain medications. Drugs that affect your body's ability to stay hydrated & respond appropriately to heat including: those that narrow your blood vessels (vasoconstrictors), those that regulate your blood pressure by blocking adrenaline (beta blockers), those that rid your body of sodium & water (diuretics), those that alleviate allergy symptoms (antihistamines), those that calm you (tranquilizers); check with your doctor to assess risk.
- Obesity. Carrying excess weight can affect your body's ability to regulate its temperature & cause your body to retain more heat.

5. Prevention

Ways to prevent these heat stress disorders:

- Use general ventilation, cooling fans, & evaporative cooling whenever possible.
- Shield furnaces & other heat producing equipment including steam leaks.
- Wear loose, lightweight, light colored clothes.
- Drink water steadily before & during work in the heat.
- Drink about 16 ounces before starting & 5 to 7 ounces every 15 or 20 minutes during hot work.
- Eat well-balanced meals. Eat more smaller/lighter meals rather than large meals.
- Avoid drinks with alcohol & caffeine.
- Work at a steady pace, minimizing overexertion.
- Take regular breaks in a cool, well-ventilated area.
- Know your own limits & ability to work safely in heat.
- Take extra precautions with certain medications. Several medications can affect your body's ability to stay hydrated. Check with your doctor.
- Avoid sunburn. Having a sunburn reduces your body's ability to rid itself of heat.

All information found at safetytoolboxtalks.com & safety.cat.com

