

6-30

Most folks are about as happy as they make up their minds to be. -Abraham Lincoln

Happy 4th of July!



Inspect your Grill, Regularly!

According to a 2013 NFPA report on cooking equipment fires, gas grills were involved in an annual average of 7,200 home fires in 2007-2011, while charcoal or other solid-fueled grills were responsible for an annual average of 1,400 home fires. 27% of home structure grill fires started on a courtyard, terrace or patio, while 29% started on an exterior balcony or open porch, and 6% began in the kitchen, according to the report.

"Grilling is a great way to spend time with friends and families, but before starting firing up the grill, be sure it is working properly and review safety tips," said Lorraine Carli, VP of Outreach and Advocacy for NFPA. "**Propane gas hose leaks or breaks were the leading factors contributing to gas grill fires.** It is good practice to check for damage before using it for the first time each year, and to clean and check the entire grill regularly."

What do you get if you cross George Washington with cattle feed? The Fodder of Our Country!

Fireworks by the Numbers

- In 2011, fireworks caused an estimated 17,800 reported fires, including 1,200 total structure fires, 400 vehicle fires, and 16,300 outside and other fires. These fires resulted in an estimated eight reported civilian deaths, 40 civilian injuries and \$32 million in direct property damage.
- In 2012, U.S. emergency rooms treated an estimated 8,700 people for fireworks related injuries; 55% of these injuries were to the extremities and 31% to the head.
- The risk of fireworks injury was highest for young people ages 15-24, followed by children under 10.
- On Independence Day in a typical year, far more U.S. fires are reported than on any other day, and fireworks account for two out of five of those fires, more than any other cause of fires. Source: NFPA (2013)

Helmets Save Lives, Period!

Most sports and recreational activities have their own suitable protective gear & equipment requirements. Motorcycling is no exception. Every rider and passenger should wear closed toe, over-the-ankle footwear, long pants, a long-sleeved jacket, full-fingered motorcycle gloves, and a helmet manufactured to meet DOT standards. Whether on a motorcycle or a bicycle, helmets work! Helmet effectiveness has been confirmed by responsible studies, while helmet myths – "*helmets break necks, block vision and impair hearing*" – have been consistently disproved. Safety conscious riders Choose to wear helmets Every Time They Ride - You should too! -Motorcycle Safety Foundation

When was the last time you:

- Checked the air in your tires, rotated them or checked them for wear?
- Filled your windshield washer fluid and checked your spare tire
- Checked your oil, transmission fluid, brake and power steering fluid (and what about those hoses and belts)?
- Checked the smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors in your home or apartment (when was or changed the battery)?
- Cleaned out all the old medications in your medicine cabinet?
- Changed the filter on your HVAC unit?
- Surprised someone important to you with a card, flowers or a Thank you?
- Called an old friend just to catch up? ***Life is short... live in the moment!***

A few Fireworks Safety Tips

- Closely supervise children around fireworks at all times.
- Be careful with sparklers - Little arms are too short to hold them safely. Use glow sticks instead. They are much safer and can be just as fun.
- Do not wear loose clothing while using fireworks.
- Point fireworks away from homes, and keep away from brush, dry grass, leaves and flammable substances
- 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 have a bucket of water and/or a fire extinguisher nearby. Know how to operate the fire extinguisher properly.

Be aware of surroundings and look for safety hazards – correct or report what you find!

Safety Alert on Cleaning Grills from a couple years ago.

This was passed on by a Montell Bayport Employee concerning an incident his daughter was involved in:

The individual cleaned the cooking surface of a gas grill a couple of weeks before the incident occurred with a wire brush but did not wipe it off after cleaning and did not immediately use the grill. His wife cooked several hamburgers on the grill a couple of weeks later and all were eaten except for two. These two hamburgers were heated up the next day to be eaten. When his daughter took one bite of her hamburger and immediately after swallowing she complained that a chunk of hamburger was caught in her throat. Initially, the thought was that a piece of the hamburger was caught in her throat. However, it was realized that this was not the problem, so her mother transported her to the hospital.

Once they ruled out a piece of hamburger caught in her throat, the hospital staff took an x-ray of her neck. The x-ray showed a piece of fine wire lying across her esophagus below the epiglottis. Based on the results the hospital staff had her transferred to Children's Hospital in Galveston.

After further tests it was decided that they would have to operate. Initially, the procedure was to take only 20 minutes but doctors were unable to find the wire. Specialists were called in surgery took 6 hours. The wire had pushed through the esophagus wall and ended up in the muscle tissue of her neck. The wire had also punctured the esophagus in several locations, causing bleeding. Due to surgical trauma, her lips, nose, neck, eyes and face were extremely swollen and she experienced bleeding from her lips and nose. Fortunately, all turned out well and she left the hospital three days later.

What had caused this incident was a strand of wire from the wire brush was left on the cooking surface of the grill and when hamburgers were grilled it stuck to one of the hamburgers. After she took a bite and swallowed the hamburger she also ended up swallowing the piece of wire, which was attached to the hamburger.

The Take-away...

If you use a wire brush to clean your grill, wipe the grill off (with a cloth, paper towel, etc.) before using it. Also, inspect the underside of the lid to make sure no strands of wire are stuck to the underside of the lid. Best practice is not to use a wire brush for cleaning. Use a grill scraper or scrubber instead. Another option is to cover the surface of the grill with heavy duty aluminum foil to prevent meat from contacting the grilling surface.

Never transport persons in need of serious medical attention. Call 9-1-1 for ambulance transport – they can treat the victim in transit. The wire could have pierced her carotid artery, or wire been lodged above her epiglottis and dislodged, she could have inhaled the wire, which could have went to her lung and caused created a life threatening situation. If this had happened in route to the hospital, there would have been no medical professionals to treat her.