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Safety Recommendations for Propane Users in Grilling Season

(June, 2010) — Memorial Day officially kicks-off the barbecue season and there are plenty of Mid-Atlantic residents who will be firing up the grill this summer. While grilling can be fun, it is important to be safe, especially with lots of people and children nearby.

According to the Hearth, Patio & Barbecue Association (HPBA), nearly 15 million barbecue grills (gas, electric and charcoal) were shipped in North America in 2010, so it is safe to say that many of them ended up in the Mid Atlantic area. To be sure you're safe when you fire up the grill this summer, follow these simple tips from the Propane Education & Research Council (PERC):

- Read and follow the grill manufacturer's instructions before turning on and lighting the grill.
- Keep the top open when lighting a propane grill, and don't close it until you are sure the grill is lit.
- Turn off the burner control and close the cylinder valve. When a grill is not in use, cover disconnected hose-end fittings with plastic bags or protective caps to keep them clean.
- Properly transport and store gas cylinders. When refilling or replacing a propane cylinder, transport in a secure, upright (vertical) position in a well-ventilated area in your vehicle (not the trunk), and take it home immediately. Always use or store cylinders in a secure and upright position outdoors (not in a garage or shed).

In addition to these tips, below are PERC's Top 10 dos and don'ts to ensure you and your family have a safe and fun grilling season.

DO:

1. Follow the grill manufacturer's instructions and keep written materials handy.
2. If the igniter no longer works, replace it in accordance with the grill manufacturer's instructions.
3. Keep the top of the grill open until you are sure the grill is lit, even if you have an electronic ignition.

4. Cover disconnected hose-end fittings with plastic bags or protective caps to keep them clean when the grill is not in use.
5. Store propane cylinders outdoors in an upright (vertical) position.
6. If you smell gas, and it is safe to do so, turn off the cylinder valve, turning it to the right (clockwise). If you are unable to turn off the valve, immediately leave the area and dial 911 or call your local fire department.
7. Before you use the grill again, have a qualified service technician inspect your grill and cylinder.
8. Consult a qualified service technician if you are having grill or propane cylinder problems.
9. Keep your grill clean to prevent flare-ups. Check for knots or kinks in gas hoses.
10. Make sure the area around the grill is free of leaves or anything else that could ignite.

DON'T:

1. Smoke while handling a propane cylinder.
2. Use matches or lighters to check for propane leaks.
4. Pour an accelerant such as lighter fluid or gasoline on the grill.
5. Allow children to tamper with the cylinder or grill.
6. Use, store, or transport propane cylinders near high temperatures (this includes storing spare cylinders near the grill).
7. Transport propane cylinders in your trunk. Instead, keep in a cool place, such as an air-conditioned car.
8. Move a lit grill. Leave a lit grill unattended.
9. Attempt to adjust any gas containers or hoses while the grill is lit.
10. Grill in a covered patio or garage, even with the doors open, because gases can build up.

To find a propane retailer near you, click www.usepropane.com and enter your zip code. Hosting a grilling get-together is easy when you begin with a safe approach, delicious recipes, and grilling tips from the professionals.

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