

Barbeque Safety Tips

The Esquimalt Fire Rescue Department recommends that you use this simple checklist to ensure that you have a safe barbeque:

1. Be aware of and ensure that you comply with any fire restrictions that may be in place, such as restrictions on occupancy use (e.g. apartment buildings or condominiums with bylaws prohibiting barbeques on balconies).
2. If you are using briquettes, allow hot ashes or coals to cool for 48 hours before removing them. Never place them in a combustible container.
3. If you have a gas barbecue, ensure that your barbeque is serviced and maintained correctly, including scheduled pressure testing of any gas cylinders (every 10 years from date of manufacture) and checking the condition of all hoses and connections for potential leaks. This can be done by slowly opening the propane cylinder valve and applying a soap/water solution to all connections. Check for expanding bubbles, which indicate a leak. Repair all leaks before lighting the barbeque.
4. Check propane cylinders for rust or damage and ensure any connections are correctly tightened on gas barbeques before lighting. Replace any worn or rusted parts.
5. Check for insect nests or spider webs in the venturi tubes under the burners. The tubes may become clogged. It is best to check the manufacturer's instructions for cleaning instructions.
6. Always site a barbeque on a firm, level base sheltered from wind gusts and well away from anything flammable (e.g. garden sheds, vegetation, fences, etc.)
7. Follow the manufacturer's instructions and use the correct start up and shut down procedures: "Light it right" and "Shut it down safely."
8. Ensure that the lit barbeque is in the care of a responsible adult at all times.
9. Only use a barbeque in a well ventilated area, as fumes and gases emitted may be harmful.
10. If a gas leak does occur, shut off the cylinder immediately and allow any gas to dissipate.

Fire safety tips

- Remember that propane is flammable, heavier than air, and may remain in areas for some time.
- Have a garden hose or similar continuous supply of water or an extinguisher available at all times.
- Never put any flammable liquid on a barbeque.
- Use alcohol responsibly around barbeques.
- Clear the surrounding area of combustibles before lighting a barbeque.
- Keep children away from any barbeque and remember to remove and secure any lighters and matches.

Home fire safety is important for the whole family and preparation can prevent a tragedy.

Following the barbeque maintenance and safety tips above will help you enjoy a safe barbeque season.