

SAFETY & WELLNESS UPDATE

Barbeque Grilling Season is Here!

Grilling is a great way to make a delicious meal and to experience the great weather; however, grills may be dangerous as people may be burned or cause brush or structural fires.

First Priority:

Always start with a thoroughly cleaned grill, as excessive charred food and grease from previous use will cause flare-ups. The cooking grate is not the only component of the grill that must be cleaned prior to use for burn and fire safety.

BBQ Grill Visual Inspection:

- Visual inspection of structural stability and rust.
- Inspect valves, burners and hoses for damage (i.e. pin holes in hoses, etc.).
- If a more thorough assessment of the hoses is needed, wiping soapy water on the gas lines makes bubbles near pin holes.
- **NOTE:** Propane has an "added" odor that smells like rotten eggs. If you are smelling a rotten egg odor, do not attempt to light the BBQ grill or use the grill.
- Never use a damaged BBQ grill.

BBQ Cleaning Guidelines:

- Grate(s) soaked in warm soapy water and cleaned
- Ash cleared out (if applicable)
- Burners (as applicable) and inside "shell" of grill cleaned
- Commodities stocks "Goo Gone" BBQ Grill Cleaner (use wire brush)
- Consult SDS # 216 for safety precautions (i.e. gloves and eye protection)
- Never use the grill unless the grease drip pan is emptied/cleaned out

Placement of BBQ Grill:

- Always ensure BBQ grill is at least 10 feet from any structure (beware of roof overhangs) and away from tree limbs or brush. Make sure it is on flat/stable ground

General Safe Use of BBQ Grill:

- **NOTE:** Most BBQ grill fires are due to grills that had not been cleaned, grease pans unemptied, or flare ups due to excessive amounts of grease.
- Don't use aluminum foil. This tends to create grease collection points, which makes grease fall down into the flames in greater amounts, causing flare ups.
- Best practice: Preplan your meat by cutting off excess fat to avoid excessive grease.
- Always refer to individual recipes under grilling for food safety.
- Always only use BBQ grilling utensils that are purposely designed to be long enough to avoid placing your hands and arms over/near the flames.
- Never leave a grill once it has been lit and never move the grill when it is lit.
- Avoid wearing loose clothing, especially long sleeves.
- Allow the grill to cool prior to cleaning again with wire brush (see cleaning guidelines above).

Safe Lighting & Start Up (in this order):

1. Open the lid (shell) **before** turning on the grill.
2. Turn on the propane tank only about a quarter to a one-half turn.
3. Turn on the knobs of the grill burners to light (or ignition button if you have one).

What happens if the BBQ grill does not light?

- Keep the lid open, turn off the propane and turn off the burners.
- **NOTE:** Never attempt to re-light until a **minimum of 5 minutes** has passed to allow any remaining propane in the air to dissipate.

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- **NOTE:** Propane has an “added” odor that smells like rotten eggs. This is the warning smell letting you know of the gas buildup – DO NOT ATTEMPT TO LIGHT BBQ GRILL until it has cleared and at least 5 minutes have passed.

Turning Off the Grill Safely (in this order):

1. Turn off the propane.
2. Turn off the burners after the propane has been turned off to allow propane in the gas lines to dissipate.

Fire Response:

- If a fire starts while using a grill, simultaneously close lid, turn off propane tank and turn off burners quickly.
- If the fire doesn't immediately stop, remove all people from the area and call 911.
- Never throw water on a grease fire! This spreads the flames and will not extinguish the fire.

Safe Storage of BBQ Grill/Propane Tanks:

- BBQ grill must be cooled prior to cleaning and storage.
- BBQ grills/propane tanks must be kept a minimum of 10 feet from any fuels or flammables.

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April is Ergonomics and Occupational Therapy Month.

Occupational therapy enables people of all ages to live their lives to the fullest by promoting health and preventing or helping people live better with injury, illness or disability.

Ergonomics is the study of people at work. It is intended to reduce stress and eliminate injuries due to overuse of muscles, repeated tasks and bad posture.

Due to the nature of our jobs and repeated tasks, we are at risk of experiencing back pain. Read below to learn more about proper body mechanics that will help reduce your chance of back discomfort and injury.

Good body mechanics means practicing good posture throughout the day. Use good body mechanics all the time, not just when you have back pain.

Lifting Tips:

- Get assistance; test the weight
- Position feet 6-12" apart, one foot in front of the other
- Bend at knees, not back!
- Keep back straight & head high
- Keep the object as close to your body as possible
- Lift with legs, not back
- Never twist!

Standing or Walking Tips:

- Keep your ear, shoulder, hip and ankle in a line.
- Avoid locking your knees while standing.

Sitting Tips:

- Sit with your back supported, feet flat on the floor and shoulders relaxed. Avoid sitting in one position for more than an hour at a time. Get up or change positions often.
- If you are sitting for a long period of time, take breaks to stretch throughout your day.
- To stand up from a chair, keep your back in the neutral position and scoot forward to the edge of the chair. Use your leg muscles to stand up without leaning forward at the waist.

Practicing good body mechanics at home and work can help prevent unnecessary pain and injuries. Make these tips part of your daily routine!