**June**

**Week** **1: Outdoor Grilling Safety**

Every year an average of 8,900 home fires are caused by grilling, and close to half of all injuries involving grills are due to thermal burns. In 2014 16,000 patients went to the emergency room because of injuries involving grills. Failure to clean the grill was the leading cause of grill fires. Periodically remove grease or fat build-up in the tray below the grill so it cannot be ignited by a hot grill. Gas grills cause more home fires than the charcoal counterparts. Grills should be well away from siding and decks and out from under eaves and overhanging branches. Grills should not be stored or used on a deck, porch, or balcony. To prevent burns, you should use grilling tools that are long-handled, in order to protect the chef.

For charcoal grills there are several proper ways in which to start the grill safely. If you use a charcoal chimney to start charcoal cooking, use a long match to avoid burning your fingers when lighting the paper. If you use a charcoal starter, be sure to use a grounded extension cord. If you use lighter fluid, you should specifically use lighter fluid made for charcoal. You should never use lighter fluid or coals on a fire that is already burning. Dispose of charcoals only after they are cool. Empty the coals into a metal container with a tight fitting lid that is used only to collect coals. Place the container outside away from anything that can burn. Never empty coals directly into a trash can.

For propane grills you should check the gas tank hose for the first time each year and after each time the gas tank is reconnected. A soap/water solution (1/3 liquid dish soap and 2/3 water) applied to the hose and connection will quickly reveal escaping propane by causing bubbles to form. If you determine by smell or by the soap bubble test that your gas tank hose and connection has a gas leak, do the following: 1) Turn off the gas tank and grill 2) If the leak stops, get the grill serviced by a professional before using it again 3) If the leak does not stop call the fire department. Light propane grills with the cover open. If the flame on the grill goes out, turn the grill and gas off and wait at least 5 minutes before relighting. Propane tanks should be stored outside of buildings and garages because vapor leaked indoors can easily be ignited by pilot lights or electrical equipment causing an explosion.

**Week 2: Electrical Safety Around Water**

Water activities can be fun, but electrical hazards exist while enjoying the fun. Electric shock drowning (ESD) can occur when faulty wiring sends an electrical current into the water. The current then passes through the body, causing paralysis, and results in drowning. Potential electrical hazards exist in swimming pools, hot tubs and spas, onboard boats and in the waters surrounding boats, marina, and launch ramps. Swimmers should never swim near a marina, dock, or boatyard, or near a boat while it’s running. Boat owners should avoid entering the water when launching or loading the boat because docks and boats can leak electricity into the water causing water electrification. Each year, and after a major storm, have the boat’s electrical system inspected and upgraded by a qualified marine electrician to be sure it meets the required codes of your area, including the American Boat & Yacht Council (ABYC).

If you’re in the water and feel tingling or shocks, fight the urge to swim towards the dock (that’s probably where the electrical current is coming from). Try to stay upright and back out of the area the way you came. Warn other swimmers about the danger in the area, and head for shore 100 yards or more away from the dock. Shout for help, people who are drowning cannot speak, let alone shout, so someone will be able to recognize what’s happening and can react properly. Alert the dock or marina owner and tell them to shut the power off to the dock until they locate the problem and correct it. If you have to rescue an ESD victim, you can reach towards them, throw a rope or life ring, or row towards them, but DO NOT swim towards them. You should call 911 for help and shut off the power connection at the meter base and/or unplug shore power cords.

**Week 3: Camping and Outdoor Fire Safety**

In recent years fire pits have increased in popularity. Though they are a great source of warmth and ambience, there are many things you should consider while setting up and using a fire pit. Keep flammable material and fluids, such as gasoline, kerosene, and alcohol away from the fire pit, and don’t use them to light or relight fires. Do not burn trash, leaves, paper, cardboard, or plywood. Avoid using soft wood such as pine or cedar that likely pop and throw sparks. Use seasoned hardwood, as fuel for a fire pit. Do not over fill the fire pit, so that the lid of the fire pit is able to close, in case of an emergency. You should keep loose clothes, children, and pets away from the fire. You should also keep a fire extinguisher or garden hose nearby.

When it comes to making a campfire, you should know how to pick a safe spot, and how to extinguish your campfire. You should not pick a spot that is in a hazardous, dry condition. Do not build a campfire in an area, campground, or event space that prohibits campfires. If there is an existing fire ring or fire pit, you should build your fire there. If there isn’t an existing fire pit, build your campfire at least 15 feet away from tent walls, shrubs, trees or other flammable objects. You should also be aware of low hanging branches overhead. To extinguish your campfire, you should allow the wood to completely burn to ash (if possible). Pour lots of water on all the embers, not just the red ones, and continue to do so until the hissing noise stops. Next, stir the campfire ashes and embers with a shovel, and scrape sticks and logs to remove any embers. The embers should be wet and cold to the touch. If you do not have water use dirt. Mix enough dirt or sand with the embers. Continue adding and stirring until all materials are cool. Do not bury the fire because it will continue to smolder and could catch roots on fire that will eventually get to the surface and start a wildfire. If it is too hot to touch, then it is too hot to leave.

**Week 4: Fireworks safety**

Using fireworks to celebrate our nation’s independence is a long-standing tradition. However, many people are seriously injured each year by their careless use. We encourage citizens to have a fire-safe fourth by leaving the fireworks to the professionals. To avoid the risk of injure and property damage, attend a public display put on by trained and licensed professionals. According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), more than twice the number of fires are reported on Independence Day than on any other day of the year in the United States. Two out of five of these fires are caused by fireworks. It is important to check county and city ordinances and restrictions regarding firework use. If consumer fireworks are legal where you live, you should light the fireworks on a flat, smooth surface, outside, away from any flammable materials and houses. Children shouldn’t handle fireworks, including sparklers. Sparklers can reach temperatures as high as 1200 degrees Fahrenheit, and can stay hot even when they’ve burned out.