

Andover Fire Rescue

Chief Michael B. Mansfield

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Andover Fire Rescue Provides Residents With Grilling Safety Tips

ANDOVER . As residents prepare to take advantage of the warm weather and cook outdoors, Chief Michael B. Mansfield and the Andover Fire Rescue would like to remind residents to follow grilling safety tips to prevent fire and injury.

According to the Massachusetts Department of Fire Services (DFS), Massachusetts fire departments responded to 431 fires involving grills, hibachis and barbecues between 2011 and 2015. These fires caused 20 civilian injuries, three firefighter injuries and \$3.5 million in property damage.

"Cooking outside is a great way to enjoy the warm weather and gather with friends and family," Chief Mansfield said. "It is extremely important that anyone who plans to grill this season follows the safety tips provided to ensure they are keeping themselves and everyone around them safe."

In order to prevent grilling fires and keep residents safe while cooking outdoors, Chief Mansfield recommends the following tips provided by DFS:

Safety First

- ~ Propane and charcoal grills should only be used outdoors.
- ~ Place grills away from the house, deck railings and out from under eaves of overhanging branches.
- ~ Keep children and pets at least three feet away from the grilling area. Children should never play near grills or propane cylinders.
- ~ Never leave a burning grill unattended.

Gas Grill Safety

- ~ Make sure the lid of a gas grill is open when you light it. Propane can build up inside and when ignited, the lid may blow off.
- ~ Check that all connections are tight before turning on the gas.
- ~ Clean the grease trap every time you grill.
- ~ If you smell gas while cooking, turn the grill off and move away from it. Call 911 from a safe location. Do not move the grill.
- ~ Store propane cylinders upright in an outdoor, shaded area. Cylinders should not be used, stored or transported where they can be exposed to high temperatures.

Charcoal Grill Safety

- ~ Use only charcoal starter fluid. Never use gasoline or kerosene to start a fire in a grill and never add lighter fluid to burning briquettes or hot coals.
- ~ Always use charcoal grills in a well-ventilated area. Charcoal briquettes give off carbon monoxide, which can be deadly.
- ~ Properly dispose of grill ashes. Allow the coals to burn out completely and then cool for 48 hours before disposal. If you must dispose of ashes before they are completely cooled, thoroughly soak them in water before putting them in a metal container.

Anyone who has questions about grilling safely should contact Andover Fire Rescue at [978-475-1281](tel:978-475-1281).

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