

Preventing Residential Grilling Fires



Residential fires caused by grilling are dangerous, deadly, and on the rise.

These tips can help you prevent fires caused by grilling and deep frying:

- Maintain a clearance of at least 15 feet from all combustible materials when in use.
- Never leave a grill unattended.
- Clean out the grill regularly, including the grease traps.
- Always make sure your propane tank is secure and the supply line to the grill is firmly connected.
- Empty the ash/coal catcher under the grill before and after each use once the coals have cooled.
- Put the ash/coal in a covered non-combustible container and keep them at least 15 feet from any buildings.

In 2013, there were 380,300 residential fires in the United States. Of those fires, 188,000 or 49%, were directly related to cooking. Cooking fires also caused 6,450 injuries and 225 deaths. Residential fires cause nearly \$6.9 billion in damage each year.

Cooking is the leading reported cause of residential building fires for the last 10 years.

Thirty-two percent of grill fires on residential properties start on patios, terraces, screened-in porches, or courtyards, while an additional 24 percent start on exterior balconies and unenclosed porches.

West Bend's policy states that no grilling, deep frying, or heating operations of any kind are allowed on decks, patios, porches, or balconies for residential dwellings larger than two-family. In addition, all grilling and deep frying appliances must maintain a clearance of at least 15 feet from all combustible materials when in use, including building walls, decks, patios, trees, shrubs, and brush. If the local municipality's code is more strict, (for example 25 feet from combustible material), West Bend's policyholders must follow those requirements.

Advice for apartment owners, management companies, and condo associations

Include in the lease/condo association rules: "Occupants shall not grill or deep fry inside the dwelling unit, on a deck or patio of a dwelling unit, or within 15 feet of any combustible material."

Resources:

NFPA 1:10

USFA Fire Estimates Summary (2004-2013)

