



## Tips for a Safe BBQ

Summer and barbecuing just go hand-in-hand. Nothing smells or tastes better than food grilled outdoors while relaxing on the deck! Whether you use a propane-or-charcoal-fired barbecue, follow these tips to keep barbecuing a safe and healthy summer activity.

### Before Using Propane and Natural Gas Fired Barbecues

- Purchase only CGA-approved barbecues--check for the label.
- Carefully follow the manufacturer's instructions when assembling a newly-purchased barbecue. If you have difficulty with the assembly, contact a qualified service person. Many stores which sell barbecues offer a free assembly service. Ask.
- Store the instruction manual for the barbecue in a safe place to have on hand for future reference.
- If the barbecue has not been used in awhile or whenever the propane tank is changed or refilled, remove the grates and lava rocks to check that the burner holes and tubes connected to the burners are rust and debris free. If it looks fine, fire up the barbecue and check for an even flame throughout the burner. If the flame is not even, replace the burner. (Most burners only last 2 seasons at the most, depending on how often the barbecue is used). While the lava rocks are removed, clean out any ash or grease that has accumulated.
- Periodically, check all of your barbecue connections and supply lines for leaks. Using ordinary dishwashing liquid mixed with water, spread the solution over all fittings. This means the cylinder valve on the hose, too. There is a leak if bubbles appear. NEVER use an open flame to test for leaks. After tightening or replacing the leaking hose or valve, retest for leaks.

### Lighting A Propane Barbecue

- Open the lid BEFORE lighting the barbecue as a leaking or open valve may cause the accumulation of propane under the lid or in the basin. This could cause an explosion when lit.
- Have a match or barbecue lighter ready before the propane is turned on. If the barbecue does not ignite, turn the control valves off, then wait five minutes before trying again. **KEEP THE LIGHTER AND MATCHES OUT OF THE REACH OF CHILDREN!**

### Using the Barbecue

- Never leave a lit barbecue unattended.
- Never move a lit barbecue.
- Use long-handled utensils and fire-resistant oven mitts.
- Wear short sleeves or tight-fitting clothing as loose clothing could catch fire.
- The barbecue should rest on a solid surface and be located away from shrubbery, foot traffic and overhangs. Remember, the barbecue stays hot even after being turned off and can burn someone if they bump into it.
- Ideally, the barbecue should be 3 metres (10 feet) away from the house or anything else that could catch fire. The area surrounding the barbecue needs to be free of any obstructions that could block airflow for ventilation and combustion.
- Never use the barbecue indoors or in a garage.

- Only open the propane tank a quarter to a one-half turn--the necessary gas required to operate the barbecue. This also makes it much easier to shut off should a problem arise.
- A certain amount of fat does drip onto the heat source while cooking, causing flaring. Some flaring is fine as it adds to the barbecue flavour. Excessive flaring, however, is not acceptable. Food should be moved to another spot on the grill and/or the heat turned off. Trim fat from meat cuts to avoid excessive flaring and, every so often, turn over the lava rocks or ceramic briquettes so the accumulated fat can burn off.
- Do not operate the barbecue's rotisserie in damp or wet weather as it is connected to an electrical outlet.
- When finished with the barbecue, turn the cylinder valve off first, then the controls to the grill. This allows the gas in the lines to burn off.
- After the barbecue has cooled off, cover it to protect it from the weather.
- Keep a fire extinguisher close by. Never use water on a grease or fat fire as it only causes the flames to spread. If fire surrounds the propane tank, leave the area immediately (to a distance of at least 200 metres from the tank) and call the fire department at 9-1-1.
- In case of a grease fire, leave the barbecue lid open and turn off the burners if you are able. If not, turn off the gas supply at quick connect or the shut-off valve.

## Transporting and Storing Portable Propane Tanks

- Store propane tanks standing upright in a well-ventilated area outside or in a well-ventilated shed. A leaking tank creates a potential fire hazard. Never store a propane tank in the house. An explosion can be easily set off by a spark of static electricity, the flip of a light switch or a pilot light.
- NEVER smoke near a propane tank.
- Make sure the tank is stored out of the reach of children.
- Do not refill a tank that is leaking, is corroded or has any other signs of damage. Ask your propane distributor to inspect the tank for signs of deterioration before it is refilled.
- Replace propane tanks every 10 years.
- When transporting a propane tank, make sure it remains in an upright position. Milk cartons work well for this as they are just the right size to hug the tank securely. The best place for the tank to travel is in the trunk of the car; secure the trunk lid so it remains slightly open for ventilation. The tank can also be placed on the rear floor of the passenger side of the car; leave the rear windows open for ventilation.
- When transporting a tank, use a plastic plug in the gas outlet for greater safety.
- Have the tank filled only by qualified personnel.

## Hints for Charcoal-Fired Barbecues

- Only charcoal lighting fuel should be used to start a charcoal barbecue. NEVER use gasoline!!
- Before lighting the charcoal, let the lighter fluid soak into the coals for a few minutes. The explosive vapours then have time to dissipate.
- When lighting the coals, stand back from the grill. Make sure lighter fluid wasn't accidentally spilled on you or any of the area surrounding the grill, as the flames will track the fluid and you could set yourself on fire.
- Before lighting the charcoal, check to see that the lighter fluid is a safe distance away from the grill.

- Lighter fluid should never be poured or sprayed onto hot coals, even if they are dying out. The result could be an explosion.
- Always completely smother the coals when finished barbecuing. A safe way of doing this is to lift the coals from the barbecue with long tongs--wear oven mitts, too!--and place them in a metal pail of water.
- Keep children away from the barbecue and hot coals.

## **Grill Preparation and Safe Cooking Tips**

- Use hot, soapy water to clean all surfaces and utensils before and after preparing meats or poultry products. Rinse well after washing.
- To prevent food from sticking to the grill, brush the BBQ lightly with oil or spray with a nonstick product.
- Always use the proper utensils--long-handled--and oven mitts, if required.
- If the weather is cool or damp or if it is windy, cooking time on the BBQ may be longer.
- To reduce cooking time for meats and poultry, marinate them first. Marinating tenderizes the meat, too. Try low-fat Italian dressing and soy sauces. These work well for indoor cooked meals, too.
- The BBQ should be preheated before starting to cook.
- Keep the natural juices inside the meat or poultry. Turn with tongs or a spatula rather than stabbing with a fork.
- Use glazes or BBQ sauce during the last 15-20 minutes of cooking only. This will help prevent burning.
- When juices run clear from the meat and poultry, it can be removed from the grill.
- Bon appetit!