



A PUBLIC SAFETY MESSAGE

LOVETTSVILLE VOLUNTEER FIRE & RESCUE DEPARTMENT



July, 2007

This month's public safety message from the Lovettsville Volunteer Fire & Rescue Company is three part: outdoor grill safety, Virginia Child Passenger Law and Statewide ban on open burning.

OUTDOOR GRILL SAFETY

While the longer, warm days are here, outdoor grilling is often a popular choice for cooking. The Lovettsville Fire & Rescue Company urges everybody to use caution when grilling to ensure safe cookouts. **Gas-fueled and charcoal grills cause an average of 900 home structure fires and 3,500 home outdoor fires each year.** Gas grills have a higher fire risk than charcoal grills. Leaks and breaks in the gas cylinder or hose are the leading cause, accounting for nearly half of gas grill fires. Placing combustibles too close to heat, and leaving cooking unattended, are the two leading causes for charcoal grill home structure fires. Half of all gas grill and charcoal grill home structure fires begin on an exterior balcony or unenclosed porch, so it is important to grill not just outside your home but well away from your home.

Safety tips for outdoor grilling:

- *Gas and charcoal BBQ grills must only be used outdoors. If used indoors, or in any enclosed spaces, such as tents, they pose both a fire hazard and the risk of exposing occupants to toxic gases and potential asphyxiation.*
- *Position the grill well away from siding, deck railings and out from under eaves and overhanging branches.*
- *Place the grill a safe distance from lawn games, play areas and foot traffic.*
- *Keep children and pets away from the grill area: declare a three-foot "safe zone" around the grill.*
- *Periodically remove grease or fat buildup in trays below grill so it cannot be ignited by a hot grill.*

For more information about outdoor grill safety, go to www.nfpa.org

VIRGINIA CHILD PASSENGER LAW

- Effective July 1, 2007
- All children under age eight must be properly restrained in a child safety seat or booster seat

For more information on the new law, go to www.vahealth.org

STATEWIDE BAN ON OPEN BURNING

- No open fires are permitted from June 1 to August 31
- Open fires are prohibited in the Town of Lovettsville regardless of the time of year
- Because of the lack of rainfall in the region and the potential for devastating fire, it is especially important that everybody adhere to the ban

For more information on the statewide burn ban, go to www.vafire.com