



Mike DeWine, Governor
Jon Husted, Lt. Governor

Department
of Commerce

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Department
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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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Increased Risk of Fire and Injury as Outdoor Grilling Season Begins

Nearly 20,000 People Visit ER Annually, Including Many Children

(COLUMBUS, Ohio) — For many, a Memorial Day cookout marks the unofficial start of summer. Ahead of the holiday weekend, state officials ask Ohioans to practice safe grilling and review and understand their insurance coverage as the season begins.

May is among the leading months for home grilling fires, according to the [National Fire Protection Association](#). Common causes include failing to properly clean the grill, leaks, or breaks, having a flammable object too close to the grill, and unattended cooking. In regard to injuries, children under five accounted for an average of 2,000 or 39%, of contact burns per year.

“I’m sure I can speak for a lot of people when I say I’m looking forward to firing up the grill with family and friends this Memorial Day,” said State Fire Marshal Kevin S. Reardon. “But while cookouts can be a great way to finally celebrate the unofficial start to summer with loved ones, they can also be dangerous if proper precautions aren’t taken.”

The Ohio Department of Commerce’s Division of State Fire Marshal offers the following tips to help Ohioans practice safe grilling this Memorial Day and all summer:

- Only use grills outdoors and keep them at least 10 feet away from the home, away from deck railings, and out from under eaves.
- When using a propane grill for the first time each year, [inspect the gas tank hose for leaks](#).
- Clean the grill after each use to remove grease that can start a fire.
- With a propane grill, always open the lid before lighting it.
- When using a charcoal grill, only use charcoal starter fluid and never add charcoal fluid or other flammable liquids to the fire.

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- After using a charcoal grill, always place coals in a metal can with a lid once they have cooled.
- Never leave a grill unattended when lit!
- Before using a grill, check the connection between the propane tank and the fuel line.
- Wear well-fitted clothing when barbecuing. Loose articles and flammable material, such as nylon, should be avoided.

This backyard barbeque season, the Ohio Department of Insurance encourages Ohioans to review their policies. Most property insurance policies cover structures and personal possessions damaged or destroyed by a fire, applicable to the terms and limits of the policy. Auto policies may have coverage available should your vehicle get damaged by fire as well. This is important to note, especially for those participating in camping and tailgating.

Consumers should review their deductible and coverage amounts for each policy with an agent to ensure they meet their needs. A health insurance review is also a good idea. Become familiar with your policy's cost-sharing amounts, urgent and emergency care aspects, and in-network medical providers.

Ohioans with insurance questions or complaints can contact the Ohio Department of Insurance at 1-800-686-1526, consumer.complaint@insurance.ohio.gov, and through the department website, www.insurance.ohio.gov.

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*The **Division of State Fire Marshal** is part of the Ohio Department of Commerce. The department is Ohio's chief regulatory agency, focused on promoting prosperity and protecting what matters most to Ohioans. We ensure businesses follow the laws that help them create jobs and keep Ohioans safe. To learn more about what we do, visit our website at com.ohio.gov.*

*The **Ohio Department of Insurance** regulates one of the world's largest insurance markets. Oversight involves licensing insurance companies and agents, monitoring insurance industry financial solvency and business conduct, reviewing insurance products and rates, and fighting insurance fraud. To talk with a department insurance expert, consumers should call 1-800-686-1526 and 1-800-686-1578 for Medicare help. Educational insurance information is available at www.insurance.ohio.gov, where consumers can initiate insurance complaints.*

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