Under dry conditions, summer activities such as grilling and fireworks have the potential to cause sizable fires. According to the National Fire Protection Association, fireworks cause more than 18,000 fires every year. Always use caution when handling anything that produces heat or could produce a spark, but take extra precautions during especially dry weather.

**OUTDOOR COOKING**

Every year more than 9,000 home fires involve a grill. Before firing up the barbecue, review some tips to help prevent a delicious meal from being served with a side of hospital gelatin.

- Keep grills clean by removing grease or fat buildup.
- Never leave an outdoor charcoal or gas grill unattended. Flames can become uncontrollable and start a large fire.
- Place grills well away from buildings, deck railings and clear from eaves and overhanging branches.
- Regularly check propane grills for gas leaks. If a leak is found, have a professional service the product before using it again.
- Step away and immediately call the fire department if gas can be smelled during cooking.
- Avoid placing the grill on dry grass or other plant material. A stray spark could easily start a fire.
- If using a charcoal starter fluid, never add it to a flame. The liquid could cause a flare up and cause an injury.
- When finished grilling, let the coals completely cool and dispose in a metal container.
FIREWORKS

Multiple holidays are celebrated with fireworks, which can bring a lot of joy. However, fireworks handled improperly can cause major injuries. In 2017, almost 13,000 Americans visited a hospital emergency room with firework-related injuries.

- Store fireworks in a cool, dry area to prevent an accidental ignition.
- When using fireworks, always have a fire extinguisher, water supply, hose or bucket of water nearby in case of a fire. Before discarding devices, be sure to douse them thoroughly with water.
- Supervise children closely when using fireworks. Sparklers – a popular firework given to children – burn at an extremely high temperature and can cause a major injury.
- Be cautious when lighting fireworks when conditions are windy. The wind could blow a burning spark and set another area on fire.
- Never light more than one firework at a time, and never attempt to re-light one that did not ignite completely.
- Avoid fireworks in brown paper packaging – they are normally created for professional displays.
- If a burn ban is in effect for the area, call the local fire department to inquire about what activities are included in the restriction. In some areas, a burn ban restricts the use of fireworks.
- If a firework device ignites a fire, contact the local fire department or 911 immediately. Do not attempt to extinguish a large fire.

OTHER FIRE HAZARDS

In dry weather, even something small such as a cigarette can have large consequences.

- Never throw a lit cigarette out the window of a vehicle. It could land in grass and start a fire.
- Never walk off and leave a burning cigarette. Always use ash trays.
- Never park your vehicle on dry grass or leaves.
- Avoid driving through tall grass.
- Make sure spark arresters on the internal combustion engines of off-road vehicles are clean.