



Using Barbecues in the Communities

West Metro Fire-rescue District is offering these safety tips for enjoying the spring/summer times:

- **Cooking/Barbecue:** Use barbecue grills with caution. Keep barbecue grills a minimum of 15 feet away from any combustible structure or anything that can burn. **Never** use a grill inside the home or garage, the grill can easily cause carbon monoxide poisoning.

For gas grills, always store the gas cylinder outside, away from structures and turn off the valves when not in use. Check frequently for any leaks in the connections using soap and water mix that will show bubbles if gas escapes. When purchasing a gas grill, select one that bears the mark of an independent testing laboratory. Follow the manufacture's instructions and if needed, have it repaired by a qualified technician.

For charcoal grills, use only starter fluids (**never use gasoline**). Don't add charcoal lighter fluid once the fire has already started, a flash fire could occur. Soak the coals with water before you discard them and never use a paper bag to store used coals. Coals can stay hot for a long time after using them for grilling. You may think they're cool but they're really not. Be sure to leave the grill away from the house until completely cool.

- **Recreational Fires:** West Metro Fire Rescue has been getting a lot of phone calls in regards to recreational fire use. Recreational fires may be used for the purpose of recreation only. No permit is required for recreational fires, but you will be required to adhere to the following regulations at all times. Of course you should also consider common courtesy to your neighbors and try to limit the smoke or watch the direction of the wind at all times so that the smoke is not blowing directly into their windows. Here are some basic guidelines and rules for recreational fires:

1. Recreational Fires shall not be used disposal of yard waste, construction materials or common household trash. Fuel shall only be that of aged, dry wood.
 2. Must be an approved fire pit, which is at grade or below and no more than three feet in diameter. The outside ring shall be ringed with brick, rock or a noncombustible material. Commercially manufactured steel outdoor fire pits and structures may be used provided they are no bigger than three feet in diameter.
 3. All recreational fires shall be kept a minimum of 15 feet from any structure or combustible material.
 4. Recreational fires shall not be allowed if winds exceed 7 miles per hour.
 5. Recreational fires shall be constantly attended by the property owner or designated adult until the fire is completely extinguished. A garden hose or other means shall be available within 15 feet of the fire for emergency purpose.
 6. All recreational fires shall be extinguished no later than 11:00pm.
 7. You are liable for any and all damages that may result from having a recreational fire.
 8. At the discretion of the fire official, any recreational fire not adhering to the above regulations, and or that poses a dangerous condition shall be considered a public nuisance and shall be immediately extinguished.
- Any person who fails to comply with these conditions shall be in violation of the above said regulation and may be issued a citation for violation of city ordinances.**

The DNR "burning ban" purpose is to restrict certain types of burning that has historically caused large brush fires during the spring and fall when fire danger is high since the grass has not greened up yet. Restrictions are put in place by the state DNR, not the county. The restrictions impact permitted burning of brush and construction debris that is most typically done in rural areas. This type of burning involves large piles of brush

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or other debris that is generally not allowed in the built-up portions of the metro areas. Most DNR restrictions affect recreational fires, which are the small campfires that residents are allowed to have in their back yards.

Please also note that every resident or nonresident person, firm or corporation shall be liable for all fighting and preventing the spread of, or extinguishing any fire caused by or resulting from their or its acts, negligence or omissions.

If there are any further questions, feel free to contact West Metro Fire-Rescue Districts fire prevention personnel at 763-537-2323 extension 2003 or 2004.

