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**Get ready to fire up for a safe summer season**

With warmer weather and longer days upon us, people are heading outdoors to enjoy backyards, beaches and parks, often planning barbecues and beach fires.

*“Since barbecues and beach fires are a popular way to connect with family and friends during the warmer months, the Campbell River Fire Department is sharing a few guidelines that will ensure your outdoor get-togethers are safe,”* says deputy fire chief Thomas Doherty.

**Recreational fires**

The maximum size for recreational fires on the beach and in backyard fire pits is 60 centimetres (24 inches) in diameter. Plan ahead to have a bucket to fill with sand or water to douse the fire.

*“Always fully extinguish the fire before you leave,”* Doherty says. *“Remember: If it’s too hot to touch, it’s too hot to leave!”*

**Eight easy safety tips for firing up the BBQ**

- Complete a barbecue safety check, cleaning, and maintenance prior to initial use each year. Ensure hoses are clear and in good repair with no cracks. Insects often build nests that can block hoses. Replace worn or rusted fittings, flex hoses or burners.
- Check cylinder connections for leaks before lighting your barbecue for the first time each season or any time you have replaced the tank. A leak-detection solution of equal parts liquid soap and water is a handy way to make sure all connections are tight.
- For ventilation and safety, always barbecue in the open at least three metres away from windows and doors. Never barbecue in an enclosed space such as a garage.
- Keep barbecues clear of wooden surfaces, combustible roof overhangs or trees with low branches. Be extra careful about the area behind the barbecue where hot gases escape and could create a fire hazard.
- Never store propane cylinders in your home.
- Don’t allow grease to build up. Clean the burners and grill regularly to minimize the risk of a serious grease fire.
- When finished cooking, turn the propane valve off first. This allows the gas in the hose to burn off. Turn off burner controls last so that no gas remains trapped in the hose.
- For a briquette barbecue, be sure to place ashes in a non-combustible (metal) container filled with water prior to disposing.

If your barbecue catches fire, call 9-1-1 immediately. Barbecue fires are typically a result of grease buildup, poor maintenance, or leaks in the supply line. If it is safe to do so, shut the gas off to the barbecue at the cylinder. This will stop the flow of fuel from the cylinder and eliminate an even greater danger.

For more tips on barbecue safety and other fire safety information visit [www.crfd.ca](http://www.crfd.ca).

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