



City of Fairfax Fire Department  
Office of the Fire Marshal  
10455 Armstrong Street, Room 103  
Fairfax, VA 22030  
(703) 385-7830

## Gas and Charcoal Grill Regulations and Safety Tips

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### City of Fairfax Fire Prevention Code Requirement

This code states that “no charcoal cooker, brazier, hibachi or grill or any gasoline or other flammable liquid or liquefied petroleum gas-fired stove or similar device shall be ignited or used on the balconies or within **15 feet** of any apartment building or other structures with similar occupancy.” Cooking devices using flammable or combustible liquids or liquefied petroleum gas as a fuel source shall be prohibited from being stored inside, on any balcony, or within 15 feet of any apartment building, condominium or other structure of similar occupancy.

It is the responsibility of the management to notify their tenants in writing of the above code requirements when the tenant initially occupies the apartment or condominium. Periodic notification is required in order to ensure compliance.

### Gas Grill Safety Tips

- Follow the manufacturer’s instructions at all times.
- Check the tubes leading into the burner for blockages from insects, spiders, or food and grease.
- A pipe cleaner or wire may be used to clear the blockage and push it through to the main part of the burner.
- Check grill hoses for cracking, brittleness, holes, and leaks. To check for leaks make a water and liquid soap solution. Turn on the tank and brush the solution over all hoses and connections. When the solution bubbles the hose or connection has a leak. Make sure there are no sharp bends in the hose or tubing.
- Move gas hoses away from hot surfaces and dripping hot grease; if not possible then install a heat shield to protect them.
- Replace any damaged connectors and/or hoses.
- **Never** use a grill indoors.
- The grill should be used at least 15 feet away from your house and it should not be used in a garage, breezeway, carport, porch, or under a surface that can catch fire.
- Always keep propane cylinders in an upright position. Never keep a filled container in a hot car, trunk or indoors. Turn off the valves when not in use.
- Grills manufactured after October 1, 1995, are required to have three additional safety features to eliminate leak hazards: a device to limit the flow of gas in the event of hose rupture; a mechanism to shut-off the grill; and a feature to prevent the flow of gas if the connection between the tank and the grill is not leak proof.

### Charcoal Grill Safety Tips

- Never use indoors, even if ventilation is provided.
- Grills should be kept away from anything that can burn – your home, cars, dry vegetation, etc.
- Charcoal produces carbon monoxide fumes until the charcoal is completely extinguished. Do not store the grill indoors with freshly used coals.
- Only use starter fluids designed for barbecue grills, **never** use gasoline.
- Soak the coals with water before you discard them and leave the grill away from the house until completely cooled.\*

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\* April 7, 2004