

Barbecuing is a classic summer activity enjoyed by many, but this enjoyment can turn into disaster if proper safety precautions aren't taken. Don't get burned; use your barbecue safely.

### Barbecue safety basics

- ▶ Check [albertafirebans.ca](http://albertafirebans.ca) to see if a fire advisory, restriction or ban is in place in your area. Fire advisories, restrictions and bans do not apply to fires contained in cooking and heating appliances fueled by liquid fuel, such as propane or natural gas, but may apply to other fires, such as firepits or charcoal barbecues.
- ▶ When buying a barbecue, select one with a CSA or ULC label and always follow the manufacturer's instructions.
- ▶ Place your barbecue at least one metre (three feet) from any structure – including a house, garage, deck railings, etc. – and away from eavestroughs and overhanging branches.
- ▶ Never use a propane or charcoal barbecue indoors.
  - ▶ Did you know that grilling in a garage with the door open does not provide enough ventilation and can cause harmful levels of carbon monoxide to accumulate?
- ▶ Keep your grill clean. Remove grease and/or fat buildup from the grills and trays.
- ▶ Have a fire extinguisher, baking soda or bucket of water nearby to extinguish an accidental fire.
- ▶ When using a barbecue, don't wear loose clothing. Wear a heavy apron and an oven mitt that covers your forearm, and use long-handled utensils to provide extra distance between yourself and the barbecue.
- ▶ Closely supervise the barbecue at all times and do not move a lit barbecue.
- ▶ Closely supervise children and pets around any barbecue. For more tips on child fire safety, view our [child fire safety tip sheet](#).
- ▶ Make sure all valves are turned off and that the barbecue is cooled before leaving the area, covering the barbecue or moving the barbecue.

### Charcoal barbecues

- ▶ Only use an approved fire-starter fluid designed for charcoal barbecues. Do not use gasoline.

- ▶ Store fire-starter fluid in a safe place away from children.
- ▶ Wait for at least one minute before lighting fluid-soaked coals. This gives explosive vapours time to dissipate.
- ▶ Never spray lighter fluid on hot coals, as this could cause an explosion or fire.
- ▶ Extinguish coal after use by picking them up with tongs while wearing oven mitts and submerging them in a metal pail filled with water.
- ▶ Before disposing of charcoal ash and/or coals, ensure it is completely cool. Live coals or hot embers can start a fire.

### Gas (propane and natural gas) barbecues

- ▶ Inspect your gas tank hose for leaks before using it for the first time each year. Never check for leaks with an open flame. Leave the barbecue valve off and the tank valve on, and apply a light soap and water solution to the hose and joints; a gas leak will release bubbles.
- ▶ If you identify a gas leak – by smell or by the soapy bubble test – and there is no flame, turn off the fuel source. If the leak stops, have your barbecue serviced by a professional before using it again. If the leak does not stop, call **9-1-1**.
- ▶ Use caution when lighting your barbecue. Open the barbecue lid before lighting and, if using a match or lighter to light the barbecue, light it before turning on the barbecue's fuel source.
- ▶ Ensure the valves are either fully open when in use and fully closed when not in use.
- ▶ When done grilling, turn off the gas tank hose first, then turn off the barbecue to prevent gas from getting trapped in the hose.
- ▶ If you smell gas while cooking, immediately get away from the barbecue and call **9-1-1**.
- ▶ If the flame goes out during use, turn off the gas tank and barbecue and wait at least five minutes before re-lighting it.
- ▶ Do not store extra propane cylinders under your barbecue or indoors.
- ▶ Excessive heat may overpressure the cylinder and cause it to release propane from the cylinder relief valve.



## FIRE PREVENTION TIP SHEET BARBECUE (BBQ) SAFETY

### Grilling on an open fire

If you are using a firepit to cook, consult our firepit specifications at [leduc-county.com/fire-permits](https://www.leduc-county.com/fire-permits). You **do not** need a fire permit in Leduc County if burning in an approved firepit; however, fire advisories, restrictions and bans may apply to you. Check [albertafirebans.ca](https://www.albertafirebans.ca) to see if a fire advisory, restriction or ban is in place in your area that may restrict the use of firepits.

**View our camping and outdoor fire safety tip sheet to learn more about firepit safety.**

*Information contained in this tip sheet has been modified from the **National Fire Protection Association** and the **City of Edmonton**.*

### Contact Leduc County Fire Services

Phone: 780-955-7099

Fax: 780-955-9401

[fireservices@leduc-county.com](mailto:fireservices@leduc-county.com)

[leduc-county.com/fire-prevention](https://www.leduc-county.com/fire-prevention)