



**For Immediate Release**

**May 28, 2010**

**Fire Up the Grill, Not the House this  
Memorial Day Weekend**

JACKSON- Commissioner of Insurance and State Fire Marshal Mike Chaney wants to remind all Mississippians, that when you dust off the grill for the first family cookout of the year this Memorial Day weekend, remember the only fire you want to see is the one IN the grill, cooking those hot dogs and hamburgers. Improper or careless use of a grill, of any type, can threaten your home, your friends, and your family.

National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) statistics say grills, hibachis or barbecues were involved in the ignition of an estimated 7,900 home, 40 structure and outdoor fires per year during 2003-2006. These fires caused an average of 10 civilian deaths, 120 civilian injuries, and \$80 million in direct property damage annually. When a grill was involved in ignition, it provided the heat source that started the fire.

“The most dangerous time in using any grill is when you ignite it. Take care before you light your grill, particularly if this is the first time you will be using it this season. The extra time you take in cleaning and preparing your grill can help you have a safer and happier cookout this Memorial Day,” Chaney said.

When celebrating the first family cookout of the year this Memorial Day weekend, the Mississippi State Fire Marshal’s Office, recommends these grilling safety tips:

- Propane and charcoal BBQ grills should only be used outdoors.

- The grill should be placed well away from the home, deck railings and out from under eaves and overhanging branches.
- Do not use a grill under a carport or garage.
- Keep children and pets away from the grill area.
- Keep your grill clean by removing grease or fat buildup from the grills and in trays below the grill.
- Never leave your grill unattended.

### **Charcoal grills**

- There are several ways to get the charcoal ready to use. Charcoal chimney starters allow you to start the charcoal using newspaper as a fuel.
- If you use a starter fluid, use only charcoal starter fluid. Never add charcoal fluid or any other flammable liquids to the fire. Do not use gasoline.
- Keep charcoal fluid out of the reach of children and away from heat sources.
- There are also electric charcoal starters, which do not use fire. Be sure to use an extension cord for outdoor use.
- When you are finished grilling, let the coals completely cool before disposing in a metal container.

### **Propane grills**

- Check the gas tank hose for leaks before using it for the first time each year.
- Apply a light soap and water solution to the hose. A propane leak will release bubbles. If your grill has a gas leak, and there is no flame, turn off the gas tank and grill.
- If the leak stops, get the grill serviced by a professional before using it again. If the leak does not stop, call the fire department.
- If you smell gas while cooking, immediately get away from the grill and call the fire department. Do not move the grill.

For more fire safety tips visit the State Fire Marshal website at:

[http://www.mid.state.ms.us/state\\_fire\\_marshall/state\\_fire\\_marshall\\_office.aspx](http://www.mid.state.ms.us/state_fire_marshall/state_fire_marshall_office.aspx).

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