

How To Put Out Grill Grease Fires: The Do's and Don'ts

Who doesn't love a great barbecue? Usually, savory food is served up without a glitch. But grill grease fire accidents can and do happen. Here's what to do, and **not** do, in the event you find yourself facing a grease fire in your gas grill.

DO ...

- First and foremost, always be prepared. Have your cell phone at hand's reach in case you must place an emergency call (not to take a video!), an extinguisher, gloves and baking soda (**not** baking powder), sand or kosher salt near your grill, just in case.
- If you are able to safely reach the knobs on your grill, turn off the grill's burners. Then remove the food and smother the flames by throwing baking soda, sand or kosher salt over it.
- Close the lid and any grill vents to further starve the fire of oxygen.
- If the propane tank itself has become part of the fire, leave the area immediately and call your local fire department. Similarly, if you are unable to put out the fire or if it increases in intensity, clear the area immediately and call your local fire department. A fire extinguisher can be used as a last resort before contacting the fire department, but realize this will ruin your grill.

NEVER use water to extinguish a grease fire or flare up. Remember the saying, "oil and water don't mix." Water can actually exacerbate the situation by splashing and spreading drops of burning oil, making grease fires bigger. Not to mention water on a hot fire can produce steam and cause severe burns. Lastly, the water might crack your grill's porcelain-enamel finish, causing a damaged grill.

Tips To Helping Avoid a Grease Fire ...

- Thoroughly inspect and clean your grill regularly, and always review the grill's manufacturing instructions. Ensure to clean the grill's surface, grates and interior. This will help your grill cook better, last longer, and greatly reduce the risk of a fire.
- Grease sometimes accumulates in the fire box area around the burners. Though the panel design should channel grease to the grease tray or pan, sometimes heated grease won't drain, possibly starting a fire. If this happens and you can safely do so, turn off the gas and leave the lid open so the grease can burn off.
- Oxygen fuels a fire. Cook with the lid down and leave it down through the cooking time. Opening the lid repeatedly to check your food during cooking just lengthens the cooking time and wastes fuel.
- If cooking oil is required, make sure to oil the food, not the grates!

Not yet a fire, but flare ups, normally caused by excess fat or grease dripping from meat into the grates can be prevented by following this process.

1. Immediately move the food to a warming rack. Use only long-handled tongs to avoid getting burned.
2. Next, return each piece, *one at a time*, back to the center of the grill and let the excess fat burn off.
3. Then, place the meat back to the warming rack, and continue this process for each item until all have been accounted for.
4. Once all pieces have undergone this process, the food may be returned to the grill to finish cooking, and with a watchful eye.

For more on grilling safety tips, click [here](#).