

Protecting Our Parishes, Missions, and Schools

Outdoor Cooking Equipment

Outdoor cooking is one of the oldest forms of food preparation known to man. The primary problem we encounter in the church is directly related to homemade gas cooking equipment, which creates a potential for fire and explosion, due to improper unit construction and design. We recommend manufactured outdoor cooking units and compliance with the manufacturer's owner/user instructions, to prevent possible serious injuries and property damage.



Charcoal Grills

Propane grills are cleaner and faster than charcoal, however, they do present potential hazards to the careless user. The flavor of prepared foods is reportedly improved when using a charcoal grill and enhancers, such as hickory chips. A little extra care and these simple precautions should ensure the safe and enjoyable operation of your charcoal grill:

1. When assembling the unit, follow the manufacturer's instructions carefully.
2. Always use grills outdoors and away from buildings.
3. Use only approved and designated lighting fluid on charcoal. Read and follow instructions. Generally, coals should be soaked in fluid five (5) minutes before attempting to light.

4. Do not use kerosene, gasoline or naphtha as lighting fluid.
5. Never add more lighting fluid when the flame has started. A flame may travel up the stream and ignite the container.
6. Keep ABC-rated fire extinguishers handy.
7. When completed, smother the smoldering coals with a lid and let sit overnight. Stir the coals before leaving them and douse with water. Do not empty coals in the garbage until the next day.

Propane Grills

Use with care—a propane grill must always be used outdoors.

1. Before taking a barbecue indoors for storage, remove the cylinder and leave it outside.
2. Keep the special-threaded plug in the outlet of the service valve whenever the cylinder is not in use.
3. Keep fire extinguishers (minimum rating 10 lbs ABC) near the unit when in use.





4. Make sure the burner ports are free of rust or dirt and that the burner orifice is clear of dust or cobwebs. See manufacturer's maintenance instructions.
5. Ensure the hose is in good condition. A damaged or cracked hose can send out a jet of propane which, if ignited, could result in a fire or explosion.
6. Place your grill away from combustible surfaces when it's operating. It should not be close to a wooden fence or beneath a combustible roof, overhang or even a low tree.
7. When lighting your grill, have the match or lighter already burning and the lid open before you turn on the propane.
8. Never move the barbecue while it is lit.
9. Turn off both the appliance "on/off" valve and the cylinder valve at the conclusion of each use.



Dangers of Frying

In recent years, outdoor deep-frying has become increasingly popular. The cooking method requires placing meat/foods in gallons of oil heated by propane. Cooking with deep-fat fryers can be very dangerous, as they have a high risk of overheating, tipping over and spilling hot oil over a large area, which could lead to fires, burns or other contact injuries. Safety guidelines are noted below.

- Never use a fryer on a wooden deck, under a patio cover, in a garage or enclosed space. Keep all-purpose (ABC) fire extinguishers nearby.
- Make sure the meat/foods are completely thawed before being placed in a fryer. Frozen foods can cause splattering when coming in contact with hot oil. Do not overfill the fryer. An overfilled cooking pot or partially frozen foods will cause cooking oil to spill when meat/foods are inserted.

- Use well-insulated pot holders or oven mitts and wear long sleeves and safety goggles to protect from splatter and hot surfaces. Maintain a first-aid kit at the facility. Call 9-1-1 immediately in case of emergency.
- Never leave the fryer unattended. Never let children or pets near the fryer when in use or after use as the oil can remain hot for hours.
- Maintain an operating thermostat on the fryer. Without thermostat controls, deep fryers have the potential to overheat the oil to a point of combustion. The sides of the cooking pot, lid and pot handles can get dangerously hot, creating a severe burn hazard. Fryers should always be used outdoors, on a solid level surface, a safe distance from buildings and flammable materials.