



NEWS RELEASE

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INSURANCE COMMISSIONER OFFERS SAFETY TIPS FOR GRILLING AND CAMPING

Atlanta – Insurance and Safety Fire Commissioner Ralph Hudgens urges Georgians to keep fire safety in mind when enjoying Memorial Day activities such as grilling and camping.

Commissioner Hudgens offers the following grilling tips:

- Keep flammable materials such as leaves and other debris away from the grill. Also, keep the grill a safe distance from your house or car.
- Don't leave a grill unattended. Keep children and pets away from cooking areas.
- Use only lighter fluid specifically made for starting charcoal fires. Don't use gasoline; it can explode. Don't add starter fluid of any kind after charcoals are lit.
- If you have a house with a deck, make sure supporting posts are in good condition. Don't overload the deck. Remember, accidents involving decks may be covered by your homeowners liability policy.
- Use outdoor grills where they belong -- outdoors. Charcoal fires give off carbon monoxide, which can reach toxic levels in an enclosed space.
- However, Georgia law states that "No charcoal or liquefied petroleum gas or liquid-fueled burners shall be kindled or maintained on balconies or within 10 feet of combustible patios on ground floors." That means no cooking is allowed on apartment balconies. Check with your complex to see if they have a common grilling area for residents that is safely away from the residential area.

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Grilling and Camping

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When camping, Commissioner Hudgens suggests these campfire safety tips:

- If the campsite has a designated campfire ring, use it. If not, use a shovel to clear a 10-foot area of all leaves, grass and any other material that might burn. Scoop out a shallow hole in the center of the cleared area and place rocks around it.
- Never leave a campfire burning unattended, even for a few minutes.
- Keep all flammable objects (matches, food wrappings, plastic sheets, tents, etc.) away from the campfire.
- Be sure your campfire is out before you leave. Soak it with water, mix ashes with the soil, and soak again. Take extra care with partially burned wood; hot embers can re-ignite hours later.