SOUTH KING FIRE
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BBQs at MULTI-FAMILY DWELLINGS

FIRE SAFETY CHECKLIST

There is nothing like outdoor cooking. It is a popular way to cook food, but a grill placed too close to anything that can burn is a fire hazard. They can be very hot, causing burn injuries.

The International Fire Code prohibits open-flame cooking devices (barbecues and grills) on decks and balconies at multi-family dwellings (apartments and condominiums) of combustible construction.

However, Washington State Amendments to the code did not adopt this section. Therefore, the use of gas, electric and charcoal grills *is permitted*. Some apartment complexes and condominium homeowner associations have chosen to prohibit these devices as part of their safety policy. South King Fire and Rescue cannot enforce these safety policies.

If you are going to grill, we recommend that you practice the following safety tips:

- ✓ Never use a grill indoors, even if the area is ventilated. Carbon monoxide is colorless and odorless and you will not know you are in danger until it is too late.
- ✓ Regardless of the type of grill you are using, give it lots of space; eighteen (18) inches minimum clearance.
- ✓ Make sure the grill is used in a safe place where kids and pets won't touch or bump into it. Remember, grills stay hot after you finish cooking.
- ✓ Never leave the grill unattended.
- ✓ Keep a fire extinguisher or garden hose nearby.
- ✓ Ensure that the grill is completely cooled before moving it or placing it back in storage.
- ✓ Periodically clean grease and other debris from the grill. Be sure to look for rust or other signs of deterioration.
- ✓ Avoid wearing loose clothing that might catch fire while you are cooking.
- ✓ Use long-handled barbecue tools and flame-resistant oven mitts.

PROPANE GRILLS

- ✓ Approved containers not exceeding twenty (20) pounds can be used at apartments and condominiums.
- ✓ Make sure to completely turn off the gas after you have finished or when you are changing the tank. Even a small gas leak can cause a deadly explosion.
- ✓ Check for damage to a tank before refilling it.
- ✓ Make sure connections are secure before turning on the gas, especially if the grill has not been used in months.
- ✓ Ignite a propane grill with the lid open, not closed.
- ✓ When finished, turn off the gas first, and then the controls. This way residual gas in the pipe will be used up.

CHARCOAL GRILLS

- ✓ If you use starter-fluid, use only charcoal starter-fluid. Never add fluid to the fire.
- ✓ Be careful not to spill any fluid on yourself.
- ✓ Keep the starter-fluid a safe distance from the grill.
- ✓ When cleaning the grill, let the coals completely cool and dispose of the ashes in a metal container with a tight lid.