

media release



Don't let your Australia Day BBQ go off with a bang!

Friday, 25 January 2013

South Australia's fire services are urging the public not to let their traditional Australia Day barbeque go off with a bang.

Metropolitan Fire Service (MFS) firefighters and Country Fire Service (CFS) volunteers will be on stand-by across the state as South Aussies celebrate the national day.

MFS Commander of Community Safety and Resilience, Allan Foster said that without adequate preparation, an Australia Day barbeque has the potential to end in disaster.

"It's nothing personal, but MFS firefighters and CFS volunteers don't want to visit you on Australia Day to put out a fire, stem a gas leak or assist paramedics if someone is injured. We'd much rather that the public is well prepared to safely enjoy the day.

"It's important that people take the time to check and clean their barbeque before use. Give the barbeque a good scrub to remove fat build up, empty the fat tray underneath and check LPG cylinders, hose connections and control valves for gas leaks," Commander Foster said.

The MFS and CFS advise that if an LPG cylinder is 10 or more years old, either have it tested or replace it altogether.

CFS Prevention Service Manager Leigh Miller said it is also important for people to monitor current fire ban information before lighting a barbeque or campfire.

"The use of heat bead or wood-fired barbeque kettles or barbeques is prohibited on days when a Total Fire Ban has been declared unless a permit has been issued from a local council," Mr Miller said.

"However gas and electric barbeques can be used on a day of Total Fire Ban, provided they are used within 15 metres of domestic building or on a coastal foreshore with a minimum 4-metre cleared space around and above the barbeque," he said.

"A person must also supervise the barbeque at all times with the capacity to be able to extinguish a fire with a suitable fire suppressant such as water."

The MFS and CFS encourage people to follow these tips for gas barbeques:

- Check the expiry date on your gas cylinder. Cylinders must be tested every 10 years.
- Visually check that all hose lines and the cylinder are in good condition.
- Check that all 'o' rings are in good condition and are visible in the hose connections. They must be soft and pliable, not hard and cracked.
- Check all hose connections and control valves for gas leaks. Turn the cylinder on, and with the barbeque knobs turned off, use a very wet soapy cloth (or a paint brush and soapy solution) and apply copious amounts of soapy water over all the hoses and valves. Bubbles forming will indicate a leak.
- Check that hoses and connections are clear of burners or hot metal parts.
- Give the barbeque a good scrub to remove fat build-up and empty the fat tray under the barbeque.
- Always check the current fire ban information before you light a barbeque.

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**For media enquiries telephone the
MFS Media Line (08) 8204 3770 or the CFS Media Line on (08) 8212 9849**

Further information:

MFS Community Education Department **8204 3611** Country callers **1300 737 637**
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Tips for a barbeque kettle or a wood fired barbeque:

- Do not use an accelerant, like petrol, to assist in lighting the kettle or barbeque.
- Keep fire starters, matches and lighters in a secure place away from children.
- Always check the current fire ban Information before you light up.
- Do not use your barbeque under the eaves of the house. Better to be safe than sorry!

The fire services remind the public that **a campfire cannot be lit if it is a total fire ban day in your district.**

People are also advised to refrain from using illegal fireworks that can potentially lead to damaging consequences.

“In South Australia, it’s an offence at any time of the year to use, buy, import or have fireworks in your possession,” Mr Miller said.

The MFS and CFS remind the public that ‘sky lanterns’ - a paper lantern that is set alight to make it float in the air – are also banned from use in South Australia due to the risk of starting a bushfire or structure fire where it lands.

The MFS said if sparklers are to be used by children, they need to be supervised by adults at all times and be vigilant to the risk of burns to fingers and sparks igniting clothing.

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