



## **ABINGTON TOWNSHIP FIRE DEPARTMENT PSA #4:**

### **SUMMER FIRE SAFETY**

**Narrator:** With the arrival of summer, many family activities move outdoors as the air warms up and the days grow longer. Family meals are planned around the grill, marshmallows are toasted on the campfire, and the Fourth of July is celebrated with fireworks. To ensure that these summer-time rituals are enjoyable and not dangerous, the Abington Township Fire Department wants to pass along the following safety tips.

**Firefighter:** Hello, I'm Bob Woodard with the Abington Fire Company. I'd like to pass along some useful information that can help keep your family safe when you are using outdoor grills this summer.

When you get your grill out for that first barbecue of the season, it makes sense to take a couple of precautionary steps to ensure safety. If you have a propane grill, check the connection between the propane tank and the fuel line to make sure there are no blocks or leaks. To test for leaks, apply a light soap and water mixture to the hose. If bubbles start to form when you turn the gas on and no flame appears, turn off the gas and contact a professional to service your grill. Make sure your propane grill is clean and grease free.

Always position your grill so that it is away from your house, deck railing, overhanging eaves and tree branches. Make sure there is a three-foot radius around the grill that is free from obstructions, and designate this area as a no-play zone for children and pets.

When cooking with the grill, make sure you have long-handled grilling tools to keep hands and arms away from open flames. Don't wear loose-fitting clothing that could accidentally make contact with hot surfaces.

If you have a charcoal grill, use only proper starter fluid to light the grill and keep matches and lighters out of the reach of children. Never add lighter fluid to hot coals. Dispose of hot coals in a metal container and douse them with water to extinguish them, stirring the coals around to make sure all the hot spots are out.

**Narrator:** Fireworks are a big part of summertime celebrations like the Fourth of July – and the best place to observe them is at professionally organized public displays since most fireworks are illegal in Pennsylvania.

**Firefighter Woodard:** Hand-held sparklers are legal. If using these items, do so outside and away from dry grass. Keep a bucket of water, a hose or a fire extinguisher nearby, and don't allow people wearing loose-fitting clothing to use them. These items are like lit matches – therefore it is best to supervise children around fireworks at all times.

Should you find yourself in a situation where illegal fireworks are being set off, you can protect yourself by staying away from lit devices. If a device does not go off, don't tamper with it. Douse the device with water and dispose it. If devices are not clearly labeled or marked with instructions, they should not be used. You can also turn in illegal fireworks by contacting the ATFD or the Abington Township Police Department.

**Narrator:** Finally, many summer chores and activities require the storage of flammable items like gasoline, paint and stain. Here are some practical tips to make sure these flammable liquids don't ignite.

**Firefighter Woodard:** When refilling a gas container, make sure your container is specifically designed for gasoline and that you rest the container on the ground. Fill the container up 95 percent to allow for some expansion, and make sure that the container's cap and vent cap are securely in place before moving the container.

Never transport gasoline in the passenger compartment of a vehicle – use only the trunk or truck bed. Once you get the gasoline home, store it in a well-ventilated shed or garage. Fill up gas-powered equipment outside, and allow equipment to cool before re-fueling or storing.

When painting or using stains, make sure you read the cautionary labels on the cans. Oil paint or stain-soaked rags can spontaneously combust in the right conditions, causing a fire hours or days after being discarded.

**Narrator:** Following these simple safety rules will help ensure that your summer is memorable for all the right reasons. The ATFD appreciates what you do to keep our community safe. If you would like more information about volunteering for the Abington Township Fire Department, please stop by your local fire company or visit our web site at [www.AbingtonFD.org](http://www.AbingtonFD.org).

