



# Northamptonshire Arson Task Force

*“Partners in Arson Reduction “*



## Barbecue Safety Advice

Outdoor activities are often a great way to spend your leisure time but they have their own set of unique fire risks that should not be underestimated. However, some common sense preparation can ensure you have a safe and enjoyable experience.

### **Barbecues**

A barbecue should be a safe and enjoyable experience but it's all too easy to be distracted when you have friends and family around you whilst cooking. To avoid injuries or damage to property, follow these simple precautions:

### **General Safety**

- Make sure your barbecue is in good working order
- Ensure the barbecue is on a flat site, well away from a shed, trees or shrubs
- Keep children, garden games and pets well away from the cooking area
- Never leave the barbecue unattended
- Keep a bucket of water or sand nearby for emergencies
- Ensure the barbecue is cool before attempting to move it.

### **Charcoal Barbecues**

- Use only enough charcoal to cover the base to a depth of about 50mm (2 inches)
- Only use recognised fire lighters or starter fuel and only on cold coals – use the minimum necessary and never use petrol
- Never put hot ashes straight into a dustbin or wheelie bin – they could melt the plastic and cause a fire.

### **Gas Barbecues**

- Make sure the tap is turned off before changing the gas cylinder
- Change cylinders outdoors if possible or in a well ventilated area
- If you suspect a leak to the cylinder or pipe work, brush soapy water around the joints and watch for bubbles – tighten to fix but do not overtighten
- After cooking, turn off the gas cylinder before turning off at the controls to ensure any residual gas in the pipe work is used up.

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## **Fire Safety in the Countryside**

Every year fire is responsible for the destruction of thousands of acres of countryside, open spaces and wildlife habitat. Many of these fires are started deliberately but by following a few simple precautions and showing a little extra care, many others could be prevented:

- Dispose of smoking materials properly and make sure they are completely extinguished
- Don't leave camp fires or barbecues unattended and extinguish them properly after use
- Clear away bottles, glasses and any broken glass to prevent them magnifying the sun's rays and starting a fire
- Explain to children the dangers of playing with lighted fires.

If fire breaks out, call the fire and rescue service immediately on 999 or 112. When specifying your location, mention any landmarks – perhaps a church or pub – and if phoning from a phone box, stay nearby so you can direct the fire appliances to the scene.

Don't attempt to fight the fire yourself unless it is very small – grass and crop fires can travel very quickly.

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