



**July 1, 2011**

Two hundred and thirty-two years ago on July 4, members from the second Continental Congress met in Philadelphia to adopt the final draft of the Declaration of Independence. This date, better known as Independence Day would grow to become one of America's biggest secular holidays.

Over the years, Americans have celebrated Independence Day with fireworks and family gatherings such as cookouts. While these activities are great ways to observe the holiday, activities should be carried out with great caution since the discharge of fireworks and the use of grills can pose serious fire hazards. In addition, fireworks are illegal in the City of Portsmouth.

When grilling please be aware of the following:

#### Grilling Safety

Position the grill well away from siding, deck railings and out from under eaves and branches.

Place the grill at a safe distance from lawn games, play areas and foot traffic.

Keep children and pets away from the grill area: declare a three-foot "safe zone" around the grill.

Use long-handled grilling tools to have plenty of clearance from heat and flames.

Propane and charcoal grills must only be used outdoors. If used indoors, or in any enclosed spaces, such as tents, they pose both a fire hazard and the risk of exposing occupants to toxic gases and potential asphyxiation.

#### Charcoal

Use the proper starter fluid and store it out of reach of children, and away from heat sources.

Never add charcoal starter fluid when coals or kindling have already been ignited.

Never use any flammable or combustible liquid other than charcoal starter fluid.

#### Propane

Use only equipment bearing the mark of an independent testing laboratory. Follow the manufacturers' instructions on how to set up the grill and maintain it.

Never store propane cylinders in buildings or garages.

If you smell gas while cooking, immediately get away from the grill and call the fire department.

The Department of Fire, Rescue and Emergency Services asks our citizens to practice safety during their July 4th celebrations. Thank you.

**Department of Fire, Rescue and Emergency Services  
Fire Administration**

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