

Hon Pete Malinauskas MLC

Minister for Emergency Services

Tuesday, 24 January 2017

BBQ checks to avoid an Australia Day dampener

South Australians are being reminded that a quick barbecue maintenance check can be the difference between spending Australia Day with family and friends, or firefighters.

In the last three years, MFS and CFS firefighters have responded to 69 barbecue fires across South Australia (23 per year).

Grease build-up and gas leaks caused by deteriorating hoses and connections are key fire risks when igniting barbecues.

Undertaking a maintenance check involves checking the expiry date and condition of gas cylinders, checking hose lines and “o rings” for deterioration and gas leaks and removing fat build up.

Background

Most barbecue fires are caused by poor barbecue maintenance, with some incidents resulting in significant injuries to users.

A checklist for barbecue maintenance is available at http://www.mfs.sa.gov.au/site/community_safety/home_fire_and_life_safety_information_sheets_domestic/barbeques.jsp

Quotes attributable to Emergency Services Minister Peter Malinauskas

Most people keep their barbecues outside, and gas connections can quickly deteriorate. Don't assume that your BBQ will be in the same condition as when it was last used.

Preparing a barbecue for Australia Day is just as important as all of the other event preparations. A five minute check can be the difference between a celebration and a disaster this Australia Day.

Quotes attributable to SA Metropolitan Fire Service Acting Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Colin Lindsay

SA's fire services want everyone to celebrate Australia Day safely by preparing their

barbeques before lighting up.

Check the hose lines and hose connections for wear and tear or leaks, swap over your gas cylinder if it's aged or damaged and clean the drip tray to remove the build-up of fats and oils to reduce the risk of fire.

Importantly, never leave your barbeque unattended and ensure you keep matches and lighters well out of reach of children.

Quotes attributable to SA Country Fire Service State Coordinator Phil McDonough

During the Fire Danger Season precautions need to be taken when using a barbeque.

You need to ensure barbeques are clear of all flammable material to a distance of at least four metres; a person who is able to control the fire is present at the site of the fire until it is extinguished, and an appropriate extinguisher is at hand

While weather on Australia Day at this stage looks favourable, should a Total Fire Ban be declared then solid fuel barbeques can only be used if a permit has been sought.