

SAFETY SENSE

Keep The Home Fires Burning...Safely

(NAPSA)—Before lighting the grill this season, weekend warriors should observe a few simple precautions to ensure that their backyard barbecue bash doesn't go down in flames. Minimal rainfall throughout much of the United States has set the stage for potentially hazardous fire conditions.

Grilling can be dangerous or even deadly if the rules of safety are not observed, according to experts.

"We routinely see dozens of fire-related claims throughout the spring and summer because of carelessness or forgetfulness," says Bonnie McHenry, Corporate Underwriting Director for MetLife Auto & Home. "During the winter chill, some people seem to forget simple safety rules, such as the fact that it's a fire hazard to keep burned coals smoldering on a wooden deck, or how to dispose of hot coals properly."

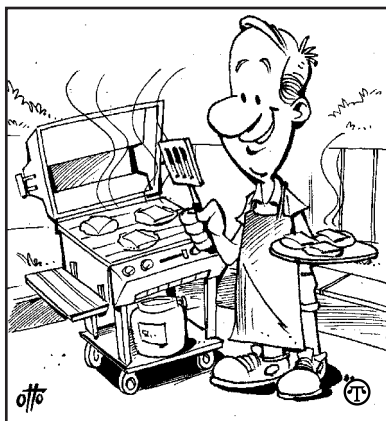
Consider these tips to make grilling safer:

- Keep barbecue grills on a level surface away from the house, garage, landscaping and, most important, children.

- For gas grills, always store gas cylinders outside and away from your house, and turn them off when not in use. Check the tubes regularly for cracking, brittleness, holes, and leaks in the connections. Identify leaks by pouring soap and water mix over the line, which will reveal bubbles if gas is escaping.

- Keep lighted cigarettes, matches, and open flames away from the grill, and move the gas hoses as far away as possible from hot surfaces and dripping hot grease. Use a can to catch excess grease.

- For charcoal grills, use only starter fluids designed for those grills. Use only a limited amount of starter fluid—and *never* use



Extra dry weather calls for extra safety savvy with backyard barbecue grilling.

gasoline. If the fire is too low, use dry kindling and add more charcoal if necessary. Never add more liquid fuel to the grill or you could end up with a flash fire (a fire that spreads rapidly through the vapors of an ignitable liquid). Soak coals with water before disposing of them in the trash.

- Always remember that grills remain hot long after barbecuing.

Free Brochure

For a comprehensive look at fire safety protection, MetLife Auto & Home offers a free 16-page brochure called "*About...Fire Safety*." The brochure is part of a popular, award-winning Life Advice® series, and provides useful information on a number of fire-related subjects, including how to plan an escape route, seasonal safety tips, and safety information relating to heating your home. Also available is a "Fires and Wildfires" poster. This kid-friendly, eye-catching poster provides valuable information on what to do should a fire occur and how to prepare for an emergency, along with links to informative Web sites. The brochure and poster are available free from 1-800-MET-LIFE (638-6433).