

# Norfolk Insider

City of Norfolk, NE

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## “15 Safety Tips for Fire Pit and Grill Use”

The weather is going to be cooler soon and fire pits are a popular way to stay warm while enjoying the beautiful fall evenings.



City of Norfolk Fire Marshal Terry Zwiebel encourages people to remember some safety tips when using a fire pit, fire bowl, fireplace or grill any time of year.

“Sometimes we get careless or forgetful when dealing with an outdoor flame but anytime you have a fire- however large or small it is- it takes your constant attention,” Zwiebel said.

Here are 15 tips to remember when using a fire pit/bowl or grill:

1. Fire pits/bowls should be kept at least ten feet away from a building or fence. Grills should be at least two feet away from a building or fence.
2. Set the fire pit/bowl or grill on a concrete or other non-combustible surface.
3. Always put a metal screen cover over a fire pit/bowl while in use as embers and sparks can travel even with a light breeze.
4. Adults only should start the fire. The person who started the fire is also responsible for it from the time it's lit until it is put out.
5. The flame in a metal fire bowl, chimineas, fire pit, outdoor fireplace or grill should be kept small.
6. Don't light a fire in any receptacle in your yard if it's windy.
7. Always have a container of water or garden hose connected to a hydrant close at hand.
8. If using wood for fuel, start with a crumpled piece of paper to get it lit. Never use gasoline.
9. Open the lid on a gas grill before lighting it.
10. If the ignition button doesn't work or a match or lighter doesn't get the gas lit, turn off the gas and wait five minutes before trying again.
11. To turn off the gas, turn the propane source off first and then turn off the grill burners.
12. Propane and charcoal grills, fire pits/bowls should only be used outdoors.
13. Keep grills clean by removing grease buildup and keep fire pits/bowls clear of debris.
14. Keep children and pets away from all grills, fire pit/bowls and fireplaces.
15. For people living in the city limits of Norfolk always obtain a burn permit from the Fire Division for patio pits. There is no cost for the permit and it is valid for one year.

“Thousands of people make a trip to the emergency room each year due to improper grill and fire pit use. To keep your family and property safe, use extra vigilance whenever you have your fire pit or grill lit,” Zwiebel said.

For more information about grill and fire pit/bowl safety, contact the Norfolk Fire Marshal at 402-844-2050.