

What's the Risk?

Backyard Fire Pits and Outdoor Heaters



THE ISSUE

Fire pits and other outdoor heaters are responsible for many personal injuries and property damage. Many municipalities and cities have banned fire pits and any type of outdoor burning in backyards due to safety concerns. Before you start a fire, always check your local by-laws to ensure they are allowed in your area.



WHAT'S THE RISK?

According to the Consumer Product Safety Commission in the United States, there were 6,200 injuries related to fire pits or outdoor heaters in 2021. Children are most at risk as evidenced by a 2019 study published in the Journal of Burn Care and Research. With the potential for damage to nearby buildings and structures from sparks or flames, the enjoyment of having a campfire in your backyard may be fleeting.



WHAT CAN BE DONE?

To prevent personal injuries:

- Ensure children and pets stay back at least 1 meter (3 feet) from a fire pit or outdoor heater
- Use long-handled, fire-safe metal rods or grill forks with a heatproof handle for cooking
- Do not allow children to add wood to the fire
- Position seating a safe distance from the fire
- Never allow children to run or play near a fire pit
- Be aware of wind speed and direction before starting a fire

To prevent property damage:

- Build the fire pit at least 8 meters (25 feet) from other structures, trees, houses, or decks
- Use an inground pit surrounded by concrete
- Never start a fire directly on your lawn which can lead to grass fires
- Use a spark arresting screen if possible
- Never leave a fire unattended
- Be sure to extinguish a fire before leaving the area

