

Is your backyard SAFE?

As summer approaches, the City of Brecksville is urging homeowners to take the time to check their outdoor areas for potential safety hazards.

Porches, Decks and Balconies

Porches can be at risk of collapsing if they are not properly constructed or if they are old. Some safety hazards to look for are:

- Split or rotting wood
- Wobbly handrails or guardrails
- Loose, missing or rusting anchors, nails or screws
- Missing, damaged or loose support beams and planking
- Poor end support of the porch deck, joists or girders
- Excessive movement of the porch when walked on



Building or repairing to code, which requires a building permit and an inspection, will help ensure that the construction is safe.

Grills

Grilling on or near combustible areas can be a fire hazard. It not only puts your family and visitors at risk, but, especially in condos and other attached structures, can put your neighbors in danger as well. The most common grilling hazards are open flames and heat generated in the grill base that can be transferred to the wood of a deck or the home's siding, causing a fire. When grilling, follow these safety tips:



- Place the grill away from siding, deck railings and out from under eaves and overhanging branches
- Periodically remove grease or fat buildup
- Use only proper starter fluid and store the can away from heat sources
- Check propane cylinder hoses for leaks before use
- Do not move hot grills
- Dispose of charcoal properly, keeping ash containers outside and away from combustible construction

Swimming Pools

Because they can be attractive — and dangerous — to young children, in-ground and above-ground pools should be surrounded by a fence or other barrier. Small, inflatable pools must also be protected. The City of Brecksville Code states that any pool with the capacity of 18 inches or more of water has to have a four-foot fence or other barrier around it. Any gates in the fence should be self-closing, self-latching and lockable. Other things to consider when installing a pool:

- Building permit requirements
- Zoning requirements
- Electrical clearances and easements
- Wetlands, flood areas or detention basins



Before conducting any type of work on your home, contact the Brecksville Building Department at 440-526-2630 to determine what permits are needed and what codes must be followed.