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AAMI warns Aussies ‘don’t play with fire this Australia Day’

Nearly two thirds (65%) of Victorians are ‘playing with fire’ and engaging in dangerous behaviours when it comes to backyard BBQs, according to new research from AAMI.

In the lead up to the Australia Day long weekend AAMI has released some alarming BBQ behaviour statistics in the hope of encouraging Victorians to play it safe while cooking.

“For many Victorians, it’s just not Australia Day without a BBQ. Unfortunately though, too many Aussies are playing it fast and loose,” AAMI spokesperson Reuben Aitchison said.

Risky behaviours engaged in by Victorians include:

- Nearly half (48%) have cooked or BBQ’d after or while drinking alcohol.
- Almost one in ten (8%) have lit a BBQ or gas stove in a dangerous manner (such as leaving the gas on too long before lighting or squirting lighter fuel on a hot or lit BBQ).
- A quarter (25%) have started a BBQ without checking the gas bottle.
- 37% of people have left their cooking unattended.

Despite the fact 11% of Victorians admitted to having had a BBQ catch fire or explode while in use, Mr Aitchison said fire safety should be a priority, but too many are just not prepared.

“One in ten (10%) of Victorians would not know what to do if a fire started in their home, and more than a third (38%) are not confident they have enough equipment – such as a fire blanket or extinguisher - for dealing with a fire in their home,” Mr Aitchison said.

“Taking some simple precautions will help ensure your safety, leaving you to enjoy the long weekend, the barbie and the Australia Day festivities with family and friends.”

AAMI’s top tips to prepare for Australia Day cook ups include:

- Check the hose and nozzle of the barbeque and make sure it’s not leaking. If you’re not sure, spray it with soapy water. If it bubbles when you turn the nozzle on, it’s leaking.
- Avoid leaving the gas on for too long before igniting.
- Check the fire ban status before starting a barbeque, particularly ones with an open flame.
- Do not leave your cooking unattended.
- Be a responsible chef and save the alcoholic drinks till after you’ve finished cooking.
- Have a fire extinguisher handy, just in case.
- Ensure your home and contents insurance details are up to date.

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For further information or to arrange an interview:

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Note to editors:

* Newspoll conducted an independent internet survey of 3,109 Australian, 18 years and over, across a full national sample in 2014, including 601 in Victoria. Data was collected in line with ISO 20252 – Market, Social and Opinion Research and has been weighted with current ABS population demographics to ensure any extrapolation of results is representative of age, sex and area.