

## Incident Summary #II-1183960-2021 (#21757) (FINAL)

SUPPORTING INFORMATION	Incident Date		April 22, 2021	
	Location		Whistler	
	Regulated industry sector		Gas - Natural gas system	
	Impact	Injury	Qty injuries	0
			Injury description	Not Applicable as no one was injured
			Injury rating	None
		Damage	Damage description	The unit where the portable BBQ was located, sustained fire damage to middle floor balcony's party wall and the overhang above the backdoor entrance, the fire traveled up the party wall and entered the attic space of the unit next door which spread through the unit's entire top floor and attic.
			Damage rating	Major
Incident rating		Major		
Incident overview		A portable BBQ was connected to the unit's gas supply by the means of a quick connect device, located at the right-hand side of the door leading into the unit from the balcony, the portable BBQ was located close to the combustible party wall and below the combustible overhang. The portable BBQ was lit and left unattended. During this time the portable BBQ ignited the party wall.		
INVESTIGATION CONCLUSIONS	Site, system and components	<p>The party wall which was part of the investigation was constructed of combustible material, so was the roof and attic of the next-door unit. The technical definition of combustible material is “A material that, in the form in which it is used and under the conditions anticipated, will ignite and burn”.</p> <p>A portable BBQ uses gas burner/s to cook food over an open flame. As the food is being cooked on the open flame there is a potential for the food to catch fire especially if the food has a fat and or oil element to them or uses fat and or oil in the cooking process which could result in a BBQ fire. Also, the BBQ surfaces do become very hot emitting radiant heat to the surrounding surfaces which could ignite any combustible material close to the BBQ. To prevent a BBQ fire spreading to combustible materials the manufactures certified installation instructions will specify certain requirements to safely operate the BBQ, This could include but not limited to, the distance to combustibles to the surrounding surfaces, the height distance before combustible materials can be used above the BBQ (if a distance is not specified but wording states “no combustible materials above” this means no combustible materials are allowed regardless of height) and if the BBQ can be left unattended. For the safe operation of the portable BBQ involved in the incident the manufacture requires in part that the portable BBQ must be located no less than 24 inches from combustible materials, not to be use beneath overhead combustible construction and never leave the grill unattended during per-heating or use.</p>		
	Failure scenario(s)	The portable BBQ was not positioned as per the manufacturer's certified installation instructions by way of being too close to the surrounding combustible materials and below a roof which comprised primarily of combustible materials. Also, while the		

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	portable BBQ was being used there was a period of time where the portable BBQ was left unattended, whereupon an event happened within the confines of the portable BBQ which allowed flames passed its confines. The flames then ignited the combustible party wall, the flames then traveled up the party wall and into the attic space of the unit next-door which then spread throughout the top floor of said unit.
Facts and evidence	<p>Manufacturer's installation and operating instructions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clearance of 24" minimum is required to combustible material on all sides</li> <li>• It must not be used under any combustible construction</li> <li>• It must not be left unattended</li> </ul> <p>Interviews</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The occupant started the portable BBQ and was reported to have left it unattended.</li> <li>• The fire originated from the rear of the BBQ and spread up the wall into the attic space of the unit next-door</li> </ul> <p>Photos (Supplied by municipality building official)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The BBQ was directly in front of a combustible wall</li> <li>• The burn patterns show the origin of the fire was from behind the BBQ</li> <li>• There was a hole in the back of the BBQ</li> </ul>
Causes and contributing factors	<p>The cause of the incidence is most likely to be that the portable BBQ was positioned within the prohibited area surrounding and above the portable BBQ as required by the manufactures certified installation instructions, together with the portable BBQ being left unattended while in operation which was also prohibited by the manufactures certified installation instructions. The event that happened within the portable BBQ was a contributing factor but if the manufactures certified installations had been adhered to the severity of the event could have been drastically reduced or even been avoided.</p>



Image 1 - Damage to party wall where the portable BBQ was being operated



Image 2 - Actual fire where the portable BBQ was





Image 3 - Fire entry point to next-door