

Toxic Briquettes

The Food and Drug Administration warns consumers to use briquettes only outdoors because of the danger of carbon monoxide poisoning.

FDA's Office of Product Safety has investigated several cases of carbon monoxide poisoning from the improper use of charcoal briquettes in enclosed indoor areas. Some of the victims have died.

FDA Commissioner Charles C. Edwards, says charcoal briquettes are safe to use outdoors, but in enclosed areas where there is little or no ventilation the large quantities of carbon monoxide gas released by burning charcoal can result in severe poisoning or death.

Carbon monoxide gas is invisible, odorless, and tasteless. Persons exposed to the gas for prolonged periods may experience headaches, dizzy spells, weakness, mental depression, nervousness, irritability, and circulatory impairment.

FDA urges consumers to use charcoal briquettes only outdoors and not to move grills or Hibachi pots to cars, trailers, enclosed porches, inside boats, or indoors in the event of rain on other unfavorable weather.