

27 March 2015

Canister cooker safety advisory for consumers



Safe use of canister cookers

Energy Safety advises owners and users of canister, or “lunchbox”, cookers to be careful when using the cookers. Regulators in Australia have identified safety compliance issues in some products supplied in Australia. Energy Safety is part of WorkSafe New Zealand and is responsible for monitoring, encouraging and enforcing the safe supply and use of gas and electricity.

Canister cookers that comply with the relevant Australian standard have a safety mechanism to prevent the fuel canister from rupturing if it is overheated. If a canister gets too hot, the pressure inside it could build up to the point where it can cause the canister to rupture. The escaping gas may explode and burn users and property.

This safety mechanism is a backup in case the cylinder becomes overheated, for instance if it is used with pot supports in the incorrect position or the cooking vessel is too large. It works by disengaging the canister before the pressure gets too high, which prevents further heating by cutting off the gas supply to the cooker’s burner.

This overheating scenario is unlikely to occur if a canister cooker is used correctly, following the manufacturer’s instructions. Accidents involving this type of cooker usually occur because the either the pot supports (trivets) are not in the correct position or the cooking vessel is too large.

Many canister cookers come with the pot supports in an upside-down position for ease of storage. If used with the pot supports reversed the cooking vessel is too close to the burner and will direct heat towards the canister compartment and overheat the canister. The picture below shows a cooker that was used with the pot supports reversed.



Overheating will also occur if the cooking vessel, for example a pot, frying pan or baking tray, is larger than the canister cooker was designed for. Even if the pot supports are the right way up, an over-large cooking vessel will direct heat towards the canister compartment and may cause the canister to overheat.



If you have purchased a gas appliance within the last twelve months it should have the “flame logo” compliance mark (pictured above) on it to indicate that it is certified, unless it is old stock that was imported prior to 1 July 2013.

Energy Safety urges user to:

- FOLLOW the manufacturer’s instructions for use of the appliance.
- NEVER use the appliance with the pot support or trivets inverted.
- NEVER use a cooking vessel that extends beyond the cooking area.
- NOT USE a canister cooker if it is damaged in any way.