

# Cooking Safety

Cooking brings family and friends together, provides an outlet for creativity and can be relaxing. But did you know that cooking fires are the number one cause of home fires and home injuries? By following a few safety tips you can prevent these fires.

## “COOK WITH CAUTION”

- » Be on alert! If you are sleepy or have consumed alcohol don't use the stove or stovetop.
- » Stay in the kitchen when you are frying, grilling, boiling, or broiling food.
- » If you are simmering, baking, or roasting food, check it regularly, stay in the kitchen while food is cooking, and use a timer to remind you that you are cooking.
- » Keep anything that can catch fire — oven mitts, wooden utensils, food packaging, towels or curtains — away from your stovetop.

## If you have a small (grease) cooking fire and decide to fight the fire...

- » On the stovetop, smother the flames by sliding a lid over the pan and turning off the burner. Leave the pan covered until it is completely cooled.
- » For an oven fire, turn off the heat and keep the door closed.

## If you have any doubt about fighting a small fire...

- » Just get out! When you leave, close the door behind you to help contain the fire.
- » Call 9-1-1 or the local emergency number from outside the home.



## Cooking and Kids

Have a “kid-free zone” of at least 3 feet around the stove and areas where hot food or drink is prepared or carried.

## FACTS

- ! The leading cause of fires in the kitchen is unattended cooking.
- ! Most cooking fires in the home involve the stovetop.



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# Thanksgiving Safety



The kitchen is the heart of the home, especially at Thanksgiving. Kids love to be involved in holiday preparations. Safety in the kitchen is important, especially on Thanksgiving Day when there is a lot of activity and people at home.

- » Stay in the kitchen when you are cooking on the stovetop so you can keep an eye on the food.
- » Stay in the home when cooking your turkey and check on it frequently.
- » Keep children away from the stove. The stove will be hot and kids should stay 3 feet away.
- » Make sure kids stay away from hot food and liquids. The steam or splash from vegetables, gravy or coffee could cause serious burns.
- » Keep the floor clear so you don't trip over kids, toys, pocketbooks or bags.
- » Keep knives out of the reach of children.
- » Be sure electric cords from an electric knife, coffee maker, plate warmer or mixer are not dangling off the counter within easy reach of a child.
- » Keep matches and utility lighters out of the reach of children — up high in a locked cabinet.
- » Never leave children alone in room with a lit candle.
- » Make sure your smoke alarms are working. Test them by pushing the test button.

## Did you know?



Thanksgiving is the leading day of the year for home fires involving cooking equipment.

**Have activities** that keep **kids out of the kitchen** during this busy time. Games, puzzles or books can keep them busy. Kids can get involved in Thanksgiving preparations with recipes that can be done **outside** the kitchen.



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# Turkey Fryer Safety

NFPA discourages the use of outdoor gas-fueled turkey fryers that cook the turkey in hot oil. The use of turkey fryers can lead to devastating burns, other injuries and the destruction of property.



## The Dangers of Turkey Fryers

- » Hot oil may splash or spill during the cooking. Contact between hot oil and skin could result in serious injury.
- » A hot oil spill can happen with fryers designed for outdoor use using a stand. The fryer could tip over or collapse causing the hot oil to spill. Newer countertop units using a solid base appear to reduce this risk. NFPA does not believe the risks of either type of turkey fryer to be acceptable because of the large amount of hot oil involved and the speed and severity of burns.
- » In deep frying, oil is heated to temperatures of 350° Fahrenheit or more. Cooking oil is combustible. If it is heated above its cooking temperature, its vapors can ignite.
- » Propane-fired turkey fryers must be used outdoors. **They are very popular for Thanksgiving.** Many parts of the country may have rain or snow at this time of year. If rain or snow hits the hot cooking oil, the oil may splatter or turn to steam, leading to burns.
- » Turkeys must be completely thawed before placing in the fryer, because a partially thawed turkey will cause the oil to splatter causing serious burns.
- » The fryers use a lot of oil, about five gallons. Considering the size and weight of the turkey, extreme caution must be taken when placing and removing the turkey from the fryer to be sure its is not dropped back into the fryer, splattering the oil on the chef.

## OIL-LESS FRYERS

NFPA urges those who prefer fried turkey to look for grocery stores, specialty food retailers, and restaurants that sell deep fried turkeys, or consider a new type of “oil-less” turkey fryer.



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