



Holiday Cooking Safety Tips

Thanksgiving is the holiday that brings people together with the family dinner being the highlight of the day. The United States Fire Administration estimates more than 2,000 residential fires are reported each Thanksgiving, with cooking (69%) the leading cause. Use these tips to help keep your holiday safe.

- Stay in the kitchen while food is cooking. Most fires in the kitchen occur because food is left unattended.
- Keep the cooking range free of clutter. Even though you have myriad dishes to prepare, don't overload a cook top with too many pots and pans. Trying to cook all your dishes at once could cause grease to accidentally spill onto a range top and cause a fire.
- Always keep a potholder, oven mitt and lid handy while cooking. If a small fire starts in a pan on the stove, put on a flame-resistant oven mitt and smother the flames by carefully sliding the lid over the pan. Turn off the burner. Don't remove the lid until the food has cooled.
- When removing lids on hot pans, tilt them away from you to protect your face and hands from steam. If there is an oven fire, turn off the heat and keep the door closed to prevent flames from burning you or your clothing.
- Never wear loose fitting clothing when cooking. Long, open sleeves could ignite and catch fire from a gas flame or a hot burner. Wear short, close fitting or tightly rolled sleeves when cooking. If you have long hair, be sure to tie it back.
- Keep smoke alarms connected while cooking. Smoke alarms can save lives. Make sure smoke alarms are installed and working.
- Unplug small appliances that aren't in use. Not only will you save the energy, but you will also avoid the potential dangers if they were to be turned on accidentally.
- Keep a fire extinguisher in the kitchen in case of emergency and know how to use it. Make sure the fire extinguisher is UL listed and rated for grease and electrical fires.
- Avoid using a turkey fryer. Because turkey fryers pose a number of distinct safety concerns, including burn and fire hazards. If you still choose to fry your turkey, follow these safety guidelines recommended by Consumer Safety Product Commission:
 - Keep fryer in FULL VIEW while burner is on
 - Place fryer in an open area AWAY from all walls, fences, or other structures
 - Never use IN, ON, or UNDER a garage, breezeway, carport, porch, or any structure that can catch fire
 - Raise and lower food SLOWLY to reduce splatter and avoid burns
 - COVER bare skin when adding or removing food
 - Check the oil temperature frequently
 - If oil begins to smoke, immediately turn gas supply OFF
 - If a fire occurs, immediately call 911. DO NOT attempt to extinguish fire with water
- Above all, just apply your own common sense around safety in the kitchen. If in doubt about something, always err on the side of caution.

Sources: United States Fire Administration, Consumer Product Safety Commission, UL

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