

Focus on Fire Safety: Holiday Cooking

Cooking fires continue to be the most common type of fires experienced by U.S. households. This is even more apparent during the holidays. **There is an increased incidence of cooking fires on Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve Day, and Christmas Day.** Cooking fires are also the leading cause of civilian fire injuries in residences. These fires are preventable by simply being more attentive to the use of cooking materials and equipment.

Don't become a cooking fire casualty. Learn the facts about cooking fire safety today!

Safe Cooking Tips

The kitchen can be one of the most hazardous rooms in the home if you don't practice safe cooking behaviors. Here are some safety tips to help:

- Stay in the kitchen when you are frying, grilling, or broiling food. If you leave the kitchen for even a short period of time, turn off the stove.
- If you are simmering, baking, roasting, or boiling food, check it regularly, remain in the home while food is cooking, and use a timer to remind you that you're cooking.
- Stay alert! To prevent cooking fires, you have to be alert. You won't be if you are sleepy, have been drinking alcohol, or have taken medicine that makes you drowsy.
- Keep anything that can catch fire - potholders, oven mitts, wooden utensils, paper or plastic bags, food packaging, towels, or curtains - away from your stovetop.
- Keep the stovetop, burners, and oven clean.
- Wear short, close-fitting or tightly rolled sleeves when cooking. Loose clothing can dangle onto stove burners and catch fire if it comes into contact with a gas flame or electric burner.
- Plug microwave ovens and other cooking appliances directly into an outlet. Never use an extension cord for a cooking appliance, as it can overload the circuit and cause a fire.