

Fire and Life Safety Bulletin

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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 when there is a lot of activity and people at home. With an average of 455 daily home fires, cooking is the leading cause of not only fire but fire injuries, according to the National Fire Protection Association. Thanksgiving is the leading day for home fires involving cooking equipment, with four times the normal average.

Unattended cooking was a contributing factor in 33% of home fires related to cooking equipment, 49% of associated fire deaths and 46% of the associated fire injuries. Something that could catch fire was too close to the cooking equipment in 10% of the fires and 23% of the deaths. Civilians injured in home fires involving cooking equipment numbered 55%, with most hurt while attempting to fight the fire themselves. Adults aged 65 or over faced a higher risk of cooking fire death than any other aged group. Children under 5 were more likely to be hurt by touching hot cooking equipment or scalded by hot liquids than by the actual fire. Safety tips are important.

- > 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 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 reach of children — up high in a locked cabinet is best.
- > Never leave children alone in a room with a lit candle.
- > Make sure your smoke alarms are working. Test them by pushing the test button.

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 just not the actual cooking.

Religious Candle Safety

Lit candles are used in religious services whether at home or a place of worship. Take a minute to remember these candle safety tips.

- Candles should be placed in a sturdy candle holder.
- Handheld candles should not be passed from one person to another at any time.
- When lighting candles at a candle lighting service, have the person with the unlit candle dip their candle into the flame of the lit candle.
- Lit candles should not be placed in windows where a blind or curtain could catch fire.
- If a candle must burn continuously, be sure it is enclosed in a glass container and placed on a metal tray, or a deep basin filled with water.
- Candles placed on, near tables, altars or shrines should be watched by an adult.
- Plan and practice a fire escape plan with two ways out of every room or assembly area.
- Consider battery operated candles for children or mobile groups.

Babysitting Safety Tips

Having a babysitter can give you peace of mind when you want to leave the home. Be sure they know fire safety and what to do if there is a fire. Be sure the babysitter understands:

- > Two ways out of every room.
- > Where the outdoor meeting place is located.
- > The emergency phone number (911).
- > How to unlock all doors and windows.

If the smoke alarm sounds make sure your babysitter knows to:

- Get out of the home quickly with your child.
- Get low and go under the smoke to the exit if an escape must be made through smoke.

If you allow your babysitter to cook, make sure they know to:

- > Keep your child at least 3 feet away from the stove.
- > Keep your child at least 3 feet away from the microwave oven.
- > Never leaves the room while cooking.
- > Keep anything that can catch fire away from the stovetop.
- > Keep pets off surfaces and countertops.

Always remember to leave the phone number where you can be reached. Be sure the babysitter knows the address of the home.

Portable Fireplace Safety

There is nothing like sitting by an open fire on a cold night. Indoor and outdoor portable ethanol burning fireplaces have become more popular in recent years. While these products provide ambiance and a little warmth, keep in mind the fuel, devices and open flame can be dangerous.

- A portable ethanol burning fireplace, and the fuel, should only be used by adults.
- Clean up any fuel spillage and be sure all liquid has evaporated before lighting the fireplace.
- Light the fireplace using a utility lighter or long match.
- An adult should always be present when a portable fireplace is burning.
- Put the fireplace on a sturdy surface away from a tables edges.
- It is a good idea to crack a window open for a fresh supply of air.
- Never try to move a lit fireplace or one that is still hot.
- Don't pour ethanol fuel in a device that is lit or not completely cool.
- Extinguish the flame when you leave the room, home or go to sleep.
- Keep anything that can burn, and especially children and pets, at least 3 feet from the fireplace.
- Store lighters and matches out of the reach of children.
- Store ethanol fuel in a closed container, away from the fireplace and out of the reach of children.

Holiday Shopping Yet?

When holiday shopping this year, don't forget fire and life safety items. Matter of fact if you know there is a need, consider giving an early gift. These devices may not be present in the home, may be lacking adequate coverage or may be more than 10 years old (replace). Don't be bashful, your action could save a life.

> **Carbon Monoxide Detectors** > **Fire Extinguishers** > **Home Escape Ladders**

While smoke alarms are not just handed out, smoke alarms can be supplied and installed by your fire department. Call 1-888-537-5967 to schedule an appointment for free smoke alarms and installation.