



COOKING WITH CARE

Cooking fires are the #1 cause of home fires. Between 2002 and 2005, unattended cooking equipment was the leading factor of home cooking fires (38%). Almost all cooking fires start with the ignition of food, other cooking materials such as grease or cooking oils, or other items found in the kitchen, including curtains, plastic bags, and even cabinets. Thanksgiving is the peak day for home cooking fires.

Practice safe cooking habits and read the following safety suggestions to help prevent cooking fires in your home. For more information on cooking safety and fire prevention, check out NFPA.org.

- Never leave cooking unattended.
- Keep cooking areas clean and uncluttered. Potholders, towels or curtains can catch fire quickly.
- Always use cooking equipment properly. Use cooking equipment tested and approved by a recognized testing facility.
- Have a kid-friendly area away from cooking surfaces.
- Wear short- or close-fitting sleeves when cooking. Loose clothing can dangle onto stove burners and catch fire.
- Never use a damp or wet oven mitt. If heated, the moisture presents a scalding danger.
- Keep an oven mitt and lid nearby. If a small grease fire starts, put on the oven mitt and smother the flames by sliding the lid over the flames. Turn off the burner and wait until everything has cooled before touching.
- If an oven fire starts, turn the oven off and keep the door closed to prevent smoke or flames from burning you or your clothing.
- Never use aluminum foil or metal objects in a microwave oven.
- If you have a fire in your microwave, turn it off immediately and keep the door closed. Never open the door until the fire is completely out. Have the oven checked and/or serviced before being used again.
- Keep a fire extinguisher handy. If you don't have a fire extinguisher, baking soda can also be used for small fires.

