

Have a Fire Safe Thanksgiving

Local News

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Thanksgiving is approaching and as visions of kitchen catastrophe begin invading your dreams - lumpy gravy, undercooked potatoes, and exploding turkeys - don't let a kitchen fire be one of them. "Cooking fire safety should be at the top of your to-do list this Thanksgiving," says State Fire Marshal Mike Matlick.

The Office of State Fire Marshal offers the following cooking fire safety tips to help you and your family have a safe and happy Thanksgiving:

- Start holiday cooking with a clean stove and oven. Remove any buildup of grease that may be on the surface of the appliance.
- Use the back burners whenever possible. Keep pot handles turned in order to avoid accidental bumping or spills.
- Have a fire extinguisher available not more than 10 feet from the stove, on the exit side of the cooking area. Ensure you know how to use your fire extinguisher. A 2-1/2 lb. class ABC multi-purpose dry chemical extinguisher is recommended.
- Never leave cooking unattended. Keep the kitchen off-limits to children and adults that are not helping with food preparations to lessen the possibility of kitchen mishaps.
- When cooking, do not wear clothing with loose sleeves or dangling jewelry. The clothing can easily catch on fire and the jewelry can catch on pot handles, causing spills and burns.
- Keep Thanksgiving decorations and kitchen clutter away from sources of heat such as stovetops, candles and other open flames.

Turkey Deep Fat Fryers - If you choose to use a turkey fryer, the National Turkey Federation and the Turkey Information Exchange offer these safety tips:

- Prepare in advance and use proper equipment. Be sure to use them outdoors well away from structures and overhangs as well as any combustible material.
- Place the fryer on a flat, stable surface and do not overfill the unit with cooking oil. Do not move the fryer once it has been started, and only place turkeys that are completely thawed out in them.
- Use a thermometer to gauge food temperature.
- Keep children and pets away from the fryer.
- Make sure the oil is completely cool before removing it from the fryer and never attempt to use water to extinguish or cool hot oil.

The process of deep fat frying turkeys has become increasingly popular in recent years and the process requires preparation and precaution. State Fire Marshal Matlick states, "The instructions provided with the fryer should be read and followed carefully, if you decide to deep-fry a turkey. This is critical in order to prevent a serious fire or burn injury."

For additional fire safety tips visit the Office of the State Fire Marshal webpage at <http://www.wsp.wa.gov/fire/firemars.htm> or contact your local fire department.