

CAL FIRE NEWS RELEASE

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection



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Practice Fire Safety This Thanksgiving

Stay alert, expect the unexpected, and follow these simple kitchen safety tips

Sacramento – The kitchen is at the heart of every home, especially during the Thanksgiving holiday, and a recipe for success during this season is to practice fire safety. According to FEMA’s National Data Center, cooking is the leading cause of all Thanksgiving Day fires and 54% of these fires occur between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m., when many people are preparing their holiday feast. Additionally, per the National Fire Protection Association, 31% of home cooking fires were caused by unattended cooking equipment.

“Thanksgiving is typically one of the busiest days for CAL FIRE to respond to kitchen fires,” said Chief Joe Tyler, CAL FIRE Director. “Having a lot of guests and activity around the house increases the odds for a kitchen fire, so as we celebrate the holiday, it’s important to remain fire vigilant. Following simple cooking safety tips will help ensure that you and your family have a fire safe Thanksgiving.”

Cooking Safety Tips

- Always stay in the kitchen while frying, grilling, or broiling food. If you must leave the kitchen for even a short period, turn off the stove and oven.
- Regularly check on food that is simmering, baking, or roasting; and use a timer to remind yourself that you’re cooking.
- Turn pot handles towards the back of the stove.
- Keep children 3 feet away from the hot stove, and away from hot food and hot liquids.
- Never use water to put out a grease fire. Instead, turn the burner off and slide a lid over the flame. Baking soda can also be used to help extinguish a small grease fire.
- Make sure a fire extinguisher is always close by.
- Ensure you have working smoke alarms installed in your home. Press the test button and if the alarm does not beep, replace the unit immediately.
- When using a turkey fryer, be sure to follow instructions closely. Don’t exceed the recommended oil level and only use the device outdoors. Never place a frozen or partially thawed turkey in hot oil.
- Keep knives out of the reach of children.
- Have a clean and organized kitchen. Be sure electric cords are not dangling off the counter and within easy reach of a child.
- Know what to do in the event of a cooking fire – know your exit routes in case of a fire emergency, get everyone outside, and then call 911 to report the fire.

For more cooking safety tips, visit <https://www.nfpa.org/cooking>.

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