



COOKING SAFETY

Whether it's for a quick bite to eat or a large meal, cooking is a part of everyday life, which leads to multiple opportunities for a residential fire. Fire departments across the country responded to [183,300 cooking-related fires in 2017](#).

KITCHEN SAFETY

Across the United States, fire departments respond to more than 470 residential cooking fires each day, according to a [November 2019 report](#) by the National Fire Protection Association. Practicing safety can be the difference between a finished meal and a fire.

- Never leave the kitchen when frying, grilling or broiling food.
- Use a timer as a reminder to check on cooking food.
- Regularly check simmering, baking, roasting or boiling food.
- Remain in the home at all times and turn the stove or other appliances off when leaving is necessary.
- Keep children and pets at least three feet away from the stove.
- Never operate a stovetop or stove when drowsy or after consuming alcohol. Alcohol and drowsiness can impair movements and mental faculties, which can lead to an accident.
- Move items away from the stovetop that could catch fire such as oven mitts, utensils, towels and food packages.
- Regularly clean food and grease residue from the stovetop and oven.

DEEP FRYING SAFETY

Deep fryer cooking oil is very flammable and [can start a house fire or flare-up](#) if it contacts flames directly. Likewise, at high temperatures, the oil can splatter and cause bodily injury when coming into contact with water. Deep fryers should be avoided, but if they are used, extreme caution needs to be practiced.

- Deep fryers should always be used outdoors at a safe distance from buildings and any other flammable materials.
- Fryers should never be used on wooden decks or in garages.
- Never leave a fryer unattended.
- Meat must be completely thawed before being placed in a deep fryer.
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions to determine the proper amount of oil to use.
- Make sure fryers are used on a flat surface to reduce accidental tipping.

- Cover bare skin when adding or removing food.
- If oil begins to smoke, immediately turn off the gas supply.

OUTDOOR COOKING

Every year more than [9,000 home fires involve a grill](#). Before firing up the barbecue, review some tips to help prevent the delicious meal from being accompanied with an emergency room visit.

- Keep grills clean by removing grease or fat buildup.
- Never leave an outdoor charcoal or gas grill unattended. Flames could become uncontrolled and start a fire.
- The grill should be placed well away from the home, deck railings and out from under eaves and overhanging branches.
- Regularly check propane grills for gas leaks. If one is found, have a professional service the product before using it again.
- Step away and immediately call the fire department if gas can be smelled during cooking.
- Avoid placing the grill on dry grass or leaves. Stray sparks could start a fire.
- If using a charcoal starter fluid, never add it to a flame. The liquid could cause a flare up and potential injury.
- When finished grilling, let the coals completely cool and dispose of them in a metal container.

EXTINGUISHING COOKING FIRES

According to a National Fire Protection Association report, 55 percent of cooking fire-related injuries occur when residents attempt to [extinguish the fire themselves](#). Fire extinguishers are helpful tools, but only should be used in specific situations.

- Keep an all-purpose fire extinguisher nearby and never use water to douse a grease fire.
- Smother small grease fires by sliding a lid over the pan and turning off the stovetop.
- For an oven fire, turn off the heat and keep the door closed.
- If the fire is too large to address safely, evacuate the home and call 911.
- If a fire occurs when using a deep fryer, immediately call 911.

