



Thanksgiving is a time for relaxation and spending time with loved ones, but the holiday can become dangerous in an instant. Thanksgiving Day ranks as the No. 1 day of the year when home cooking fires occur, according to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). The Consumer Product Safety Commission reports that more than 200 turkey-fryer [incidents](#) have occurred in the last two decades (1998–2018), resulting in almost \$10 million in property loss, and the National Safety Council estimated 485 people died in car accidents during the 2020 [Thanksgiving weekend](#). Follow some basic tips to help keep the holiday fun and safe for everyone.

COOKING SAFETY

Food is a major aspect of nearly every Thanksgiving celebration. Before the feast begins, keep the following cooking safety information in mind.

- Stay in the kitchen while cooking food on the stovetop, and stay at home while food is in the oven. Unattended cooking is the most common contributing factor in cooking fires and fire deaths ([NFPA](#)).
- Remove items from the stovetop that could catch fire such as oven mitts, utensils, towels and food packages.
- Keep children and pets at least three feet away from the stove to avoid burns from the appliance or spilled food.
- Deep fryers should always be used outdoors at a safe distance from buildings, porches and any other flammable materials.
- Never leave the fryer unattended.
- If the meat is not completely thawed before being cooked in a fryer, a grease fire could occur.
- Keep an all-purpose [fire extinguisher](#) nearby and never use water to douse a grease fire.
- If a fire is too large to address safely, evacuate the home and call 911.

TRAVEL SAFETY

The holidays see an increase in travelers on their way to visit loved ones. With more people traveling, extra precaution should be practiced.

- Keep track of weather and road conditions through local radio, news channels or social media postings. Other resources include the [Indiana county travel status map](#) and the Indiana Department of Transportation's [travel information page](#). The advisory map and an [INDOT Mobile app](#) are also available on Android and Apple devices.
- If traveling by car, have a mechanic check the vehicle before departing.
- If traveling with children, remind them to not speak to strangers and to stay with a responsible adult at all times.

- Have a fully stocked [emergency vehicle kit](#) in the event of a car breakdown.
- Immediately report anything that appears suspicious to law enforcement.
- Thanksgiving Eve is the deadliest time for alcohol-related fatal accidents. Never drink alcohol and drive because it impairs physical and mental faculties.

PET SAFETY

For many, pets are an important member of the household. Help keep the holiday enjoyable for them too.

- Pets should only have small, boneless portions of fully cooked turkey.
- If guests visit, consider restricting room access to prevent stress-induced aggression.
- Remind guests to not feed pets any table scraps. Too much food can lead to stomach problems.
- To discourage begging, feed pets at the same time the Thanksgiving meal is consumed.
- Remove trash and the turkey carcass immediately to prevent pets from eating bones or other harmful foods.