



Department of Commerce

Division of State Fire Marshal

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Holiday Cooking Safety

The Division of State Fire Marshal is reminding Ohioans about the dangers of cooking fires this holiday season.

“Cooking fires are the leading cause of home fires in Ohio and the risk of cooking-related fires significantly increases on Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day,” said Interim State Fire Marshal Donald C. Cooper. “I urge all Ohioans to use common sense when cooking this holiday season so that you may have a joyful holiday gathering.”

According to a new report from the U.S. Fire Administration, an estimated 2,000 Thanksgiving Day house fires occur annually in the United States, resulting in an estimated average of 5 deaths, 25 injuries, and \$21 million in property loss. The report adds that the leading cause of all Thanksgiving Day fires is, by far, cooking.

Marshal Cooper offers the following safety tips for safe holiday cooking:

- Stay in the kitchen when you are frying, grilling, broiling or boiling food.
- If you must leave the room, even for a short period of time, turn off the stove.
- Have a safety zone and keep children and pets three feet away from the stove and oven.
- Never hold a child or pet while cooking.
- Avoid wearing loose clothing or dangling sleeves while cooking.
- Keep potholders, oven mitts, towels and anything else that can burn away from your stovetop.
- Clean up food and grease from burners and the stove top.
- If you must use a turkey fryer, keep the fryer outside in view when it is on and keep it away from buildings and other structures, such as garages, carports and decks. The turkey should be thawed prior to frying. Always follow the manufacturer’s instructions.
- Keep an ABC multi-purpose dry chemical fire extinguisher nearby. Never use water to extinguish a grease fire. Water and grease are a dangerous combination and could cause hot grease to splatter.

In addition to using caution in the kitchen, Marshal Cooper encourages Ohioans to have a working smoke alarm installed on every level of the home and inside each bedroom or sleeping area. Each member of the household should know the home fire escape plan and practice it twice a year. Also, holiday guests should be made aware of the escape plan and the location of any fire extinguishers in case there is an emergency.

