



Fort Belvoir Directorate of Emergency Services

Fire and Emergency Services Division

Office of the Fire Marshal

6100 Abbot Road

Fort Belvoir, VA 22060

Office: (703) 805-2091 Non-Emergency Dispatch (703) 806-6911



KEEP YOUR FAMILY SAFE—HAPPY THANKSGIVING

Fort Belvoir, VA—November 20, 2015—More cooking fires occur on Thanksgiving than on any other day of the year. With Thanksgiving quickly approaching, Fire Chief Monroe is urging residents to enjoy the Thanksgiving holiday and to keep safety at the top of everyone's "to do" list this holiday season. Unattended cooking is the leading cause of residential fires and we're asking residents to follow these simple safety tips and to have a happy and safe Thanksgiving holiday.

Cooking Safety Tips:

- Be alert! Stay in the kitchen when using the stovetop and use a timer. If you must leave the kitchen, even for a minute, turn off the stove.
- Keep anything that can catch fire at least 3 feet from the stove, toaster oven or other heat source. This includes pot holders, food packaging, dish towels, paper/plastic bags, etc.
- **Do not pour water on a grease fire.** Pouring water on a grease fire can cause the fire to spread. In the event of a range-top fire, turn off the burner, put on an oven mitt and smother the flames by carefully sliding a lid or cookie sheet onto the pan. Leave the lid in place until the pot or pan has cooled.
- Clean cooking surfaces regularly to prevent grease buildup which can ignite.
- Always wear short, tight-fitting sleeves when cooking to prevent clothing from coming in contact with a burner and catching fire.
- Do not hold children while cooking or carrying hot foods or drinks. Keep children at a safe distance from hot surfaces, liquids and other kitchen hazards.
- Plug microwaves and other kitchen appliances directly into an outlet. Never use an extension cord for a cooking appliance as it can overload the circuit and cause a fire.
- Double-check the kitchen before you go to bed or leave the house. Make sure all other appliances are turned off and that any candles or smoking materials are safely extinguished.
- Smoke alarms save lives. Install a smoke alarm on every level of your home, test alarms monthly and change batteries annually or as recommended by the manufacturer if your alarm features long-life batteries.

Turkey Fryer Safety Tips:

Turkey fryers are becoming an increasingly popular choice to cook the Thanksgiving turkey and can be extremely dangerous if proper precautions are not taken. If your plans include using a turkey fryer, fire department officials urge residents to follow all manufacturer directions closely and to review the following safety tips:

- Fryers should always be used outdoors at least 50 feet from buildings and any flammable materials. Never use a fryer on a wooden deck, under a patio cover, in a garage, porch or other enclosed space.

"Keeping the Homefront Safe"



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- Never leave a fryer unattended.
- By design, turkey fryers are prone to tipping over. Fryers should always be used on a non-combustible, flat surface to reduce accidental tipping.
- Do not overfill the fryer. The oil may spill out of the unit when the turkey is placed into the cooking pot. Oil may hit the burner/flames resulting in a potential fire hazard that could engulf the entire unit.
- Oil and water do not mix! Make sure the turkey is completely thawed before it is placed in a fryer. Partially frozen turkeys can cause a spillover effect which may result in a fire.
- Some units do not have thermostat controls and, if not carefully watched, have the potential to overheat the oil to the point of combustion.
- Use well-insulated potholders or oven mitts when touching the pot or lid handle. The sides of the cooking pot, lid and pot handles get dangerously hot and can result in severe burns. If available, use safety goggles to protect your eyes from any oil splatter.
- Keep children and pets away from fryers. The oil can remain dangerously hot even hours after use.

Following these simple fire safety tips can boost survival rates and reduce injuries dramatically. For more information about our fire safety programs or to request a free home safety assessment or smoke alarm check on Fort Belvoir, please contact the Fire Marshal's Office at 703-805-2091.



Use turkey fryers outdoors.

Never use them on a wooden deck or in a garage.

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