

Cooking Fire Safety (2 of 2)

Protect Children from Scalds and Burns

- ❖ Young children are at high risk of being burned by hot food and liquids. Keep children away from cooking areas by enforcing a "kid-free zone" of 3 feet (1 meter) around the stove.
- ❖ Keep young children at least 3 feet (1 meter) away from any place where hot food or drink is being prepared or carried. Keep hot foods and liquids away from table and counter edges.
- ❖ When young children are present, use the stove's back burners whenever possible.
- ❖ Never hold a child while cooking, drinking, or carrying hot foods or liquids.
- ❖ Teach children that hot things burn.
- ❖ When children are old enough, teach them to cook safely. Supervise them closely.

Prevent Scalds and Burns

- ❖ To prevent spills due to overturn of appliances containing hot food or liquids, use the back burner when possible and/or turn pot handles away from the stove's edge. All appliance cords need to be kept coiled and away from counter edges.
- ❖ Use oven mitts or potholders when moving hot food from ovens, microwave ovens, or stovetops. Never use wet oven mitts or potholders as they can cause scald burns.
- ❖ Replace old or worn oven mitts.
- ❖ Treat a burn right away, putting it in cool water. Cool the burn for 3 to 5 minutes. If the burn is bigger than your fist or if you have any questions about how to treat it, seek medical attention right away.

Install and Use Microwave Ovens Safely

- ❖ Place or install the microwave oven at a safe height, within easy reach of all users. The face of the person using the microwave oven should always be higher than the front of the microwave oven door. This is to prevent hot food or liquid from spilling onto a user's face or body from above and to prevent the microwave oven itself from falling onto a user.
- ❖ Never use aluminum foil or metal objects in a microwave oven. They can cause a fire and damage the oven.
- ❖ Heat food only in containers or dishes that are safe for microwave use.
- ❖ Open heated food containers slowly away from the face to avoid steam burns. Hot steam escaping from the container or food can cause burns.
- ❖ Foods heat unevenly in microwave ovens. Stir and test before eating.

How and When to Fight Cooking Fires

- ❖ When in doubt, just get out. When you leave, close the door behind you to help contain the fire. Call 9-1-1 or the local emergency number after you leave.
- ❖ If you do try to fight the fire, be sure others are already getting out and you have a clear path to the exit.
- ❖ Always keep an oven mitt and a lid nearby when you are cooking. If a small grease fire starts in a pan, smother the flames by carefully sliding the lid over the pan (make sure you are wearing the oven mitt). Turn off the burner. Do not move the pan. To keep the fire from restarting, leave the lid on until the pan is completely cool.
- ❖ In case of an oven fire, turn off the heat and keep the door closed to prevent flames from burning you or your clothing.
- ❖ If you have a fire in your microwave oven, turn it off immediately and keep the door closed. Never open the door until the fire is completely out. Unplug the appliance if you can safely reach the outlet.
- ❖ After a fire, both ovens and microwaves should be checked and/or serviced before being used again.

Nuisance Smoke Alarms

- ❖ Move smoke alarms farther away from kitchens according to manufacturers' instructions and/or install a smoke alarm with a pause button.
- ❖ If a smoke alarm sounds during normal cooking, press the pause button if the smoke alarm has one. Open the door or window or fan the area with a towel to get the air moving. Do not disable the smoke alarm or take out the batteries.
- ❖ Treat every smoke alarm activation as a likely fire and react quickly and safely to the alarm.