



OREGON

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State Fire Marshal urges Oregonians to use caution with holiday cooking

With Thanksgiving fast approaching, State Fire Marshal Randy Simpson reminds Oregonians to practice cooking fire safety when preparing holiday meals.

From 2004 through 2008, there were 2,961 cooking-related fires in Oregon causing six deaths, 246 civilian injuries, 19 firefighter injuries, and more than \$20 million in property loss.

“Every year cooking-related fires increase during the holidays,” said Simpson. “Taking a few simple steps can keep you and your loved ones from having a tragic Thanksgiving.”

Cooking safety tips:

- Keep a close eye on your cooking, never leave cooking food unattended
- Keep your cooking area clean, including stovetop, oven, and exhaust fan
- Keep potholders, dishtowels, paper towels, and other combustibles away from stove burners
- Heat cooking oil slowly and watch it closely; it can ignite quickly
- Don't wear loose sleeves over hot stove burners – they can melt, ignite, or catch on handles of pots and pans spilling hot oil and other liquids
- Keep a fire extinguisher in your kitchen and know how to use it

The Oregon State Fire Marshal (OSFM) agrees with officials from Underwriters Laboratories that deep fat turkey fryers are dangerous and present numerous safety hazards to consumers. The OSFM does not recommend the use of deep fat turkey fryers. However, we also recognize families are increasingly choosing this method to prepare their turkey. If you insist on using one, the OSFM urge you to use extreme caution.

“If you’re cooking your turkey in a deep fat fryer, always do it outdoors and never leave it unattended,” advises Simpson. “Hot oil is extremely dangerous, so never use turkey fryers on a wooden deck or in your garage.”

Place the fryer on a flat, stable surface and don’t overfill it with cooking oil. Once the fryer is started, don’t move it, and only insert turkeys that are completely thawed, otherwise hot oil may boil over the sides of the fryer. Keep children away from the fryer, and use a thermometer to gauge food temperature. After cooking, make sure the oil is completely cool before removing it from the fryer. Never use water to cool hot oil or extinguish a cooking oil fire.

Additional turkey fryer safety tips:

- Raise and lower food slowly to reduce splatter and prevent burns.
- Cover bare skin when adding or removing food from the fryer.
- Make sure to have at least two feet of space between the propane tank and the fryer burner.
- If the oil begins to smoke, immediately turn the fryer gas supply off.

Oregonians are reminded to have smoke alarms on every level of their home, outside each sleeping area and in every bedroom. Test your smoke alarms monthly. Replace smoke alarms that are 8-10 years old.

For more information on home fire safety visit:

http://www.oregon.gov/OSP/SFM/CommEd_FireSafety_Program.shtml

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