

SAFETY DIRECTOR BULLETIN

October 2020

National Fire Prevention Week is October 4-10, 2020



The theme for 2020 is ***"Serve up Fire Safety in the Kitchen"***. Unattended cooking is the leading cause of fires in the home. The Safety Director offers the following tips to prevent and react to cooking fires:

Keep kitchen appliances clean and in good repair – Accumulated grease, dust, and food can quickly spread a small pan fire to the cooktop and to the cabinets. Stay alert to changes in performance of your stove. They could indicate it is time to have the appliance serviced by a professional.

Install a smoke detector near, but not in the kitchen – This should help with nuisance alarms but still provide early warning of a developing fire.

Provide at least a 5-pound ABC fire extinguisher close to the cooking appliances, but not too close – Do not store the extinguisher in a cabinet under or immediately adjacent to the stove. Move it to a more distant location in the kitchen or just outside the kitchen in a pantry or closet.

Do not use metal in the microwave – Be aware that metal may be used in certain paints on paper plates and dishes. Likewise, do not use non-oven safe containers, such as pizza boxes, in the oven.

Do not overfill pots or pans with oil or grease – Choose a proper-sized cooking vessel.

Keep potholders and dish towel away from cooking surfaces

Never leave cooking food unattended – Stay in the kitchen when using the cooktop. Use timers as a reminder to check on food.

If a fire starts

Use a lid to immediately smother the flames, if possible – avoid using baking powder or flour.

Call 9-1-1 to summons the local fire department – If you are not immediately able to extinguish the fire with the lid, call the fire department. Delayed notifications can lead to bigger fires and more damage. Firefighters are not 'bothered' by small fires. They are more than happy to check for extension behind walls, and if everything is safe, quickly leaving.

Evacuate – Get others out of the house, even if you are going to try to fight the fire. If you are not successful at quickly putting out the fire, you should leave too.

Use the fire extinguisher, if a lid cannot be used – Give it one try. If you cannot extinguish the fire with a fire extinguisher, you should leave at that point.