

## Kitchen Fire Safety

The kitchen is one of the most dangerous rooms in the house. It contains many hazards that can cause burns and unintentional fires. Every year many residential fires start in the kitchen, the largest category for causes of residential fires. It's important to recognize proper heating and cooking equipment functions, and to know how to extinguish a grease fire. The Danville Fire Department encourages everyone to learn how to protect yourself and your family from damaging fires, injuries or loss of life.



- Establish a “safety area” in the kitchen to keep small children confined and away from hot surfaces, hot liquids or flames.
- Always attend to pots and pans heating on the stove. If you need to leave the kitchen while cooking, turn off the heat. A distraction can be an invitation to disaster.
- Turn pot and pan handles in and away from the edge of the stove.
- Avoid storing things above the stove. People can get burned when reaching over the stove.
- Wear short or tight fitting sleeves when cooking. Loose sleeves could catch fire easily.



### Ovens and Ranges

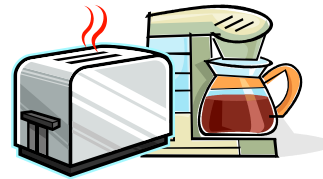
- Always make sure the oven and stove top are clean. If not, clean them thoroughly and safely. Residue grease and food can catch fire.



- An electric burner coil can reach a temperature of more than 1,000 degrees Fahrenheit. This can ignite clothing even after the coil has been turned off. Flammable fabrics, such as trash, dish cloths or curtains can be ignited merely by being used or stored near a gas or electric range.
- Vapors from contact cement, gasoline, cleaning fluids or other flammable liquids can be ignited by the pilot of the kitchen range.
- If you have an oven fire, turn the controls off and close the door tightly. This will smother the flames.

### Appliances

- Do not allow appliance cords to dangle over the edge of counter tops or tables. Children may pull at them and injure themselves. Or you may catch them unintentionally and pull them off the counter.
- Avoid overloading an electrical outlet. Avoid having two heating appliances (toaster, iron, etc.) on the same outlet at the same time.
- If an appliance smells funny, doesn't function correctly, or has frayed or broken wiring, have it repaired or replaced.
- Unplug small appliances (toasters, can openers, blenders, etc.) after use.
- Keep paper, cardboard boxes, grocery bags, etc. away from stove elements.
- Make sure that the oven, burners and exhaust hood of your stove are clean and free of grease.



- Always wait until appliances are cool before putting them away. Never wrap a cord around a warm appliance.

### Grease fires

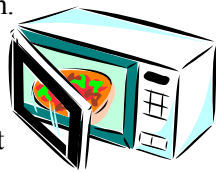
- Do not throw water on a flaming pot.
- Do not carry the pot/pan or throw contents into the sink. Hot oil can reach temperatures over 200 degrees Centigrade and contact with skin would cause deep burns instantly.
- When deep frying use only a thermostatically controlled electric deep fat fryer.
- Keep a tight fitting lid nearby to cover the pot if the oil ignites. Turn off the heat.
- Keep a suitable portable fire extinguisher nearby and know how to use it. The Danville Fire Department recommends having an ABC fire extinguisher in the kitchen. Make sure it is charged at all times.



### Microwave Ovens

- Fires or heat injuries can happen in microwave ovens too. The most common type of burn involves the hands. People do not expect items heated in the microwave oven to present the same risk as items heated by other more conventional means. The fact that a food container may not be hot may mislead an individual to assume that the food itself is not really hot—thus a burn injury occurs.

- Take lids or coverings off carefully to avoid burns from steam.
- Use oven mitts to remove dishes from microwave...The containers of items that have been heated for extended periods of time may be hot.
- Avoid using metal in the microwave (aluminum foil, staples in bag, twist ties, etc.). It may spark, become very hot, and ignite combustible items such as paper and plastic.
- If a fire occurs, keep the oven door shut. Unplug the appliance.
- Some manufacturers do not recommend that their products be heated in a microwave oven. Be sure to follow their recommendations. For example, some baby foods are not to be heated in a microwave. And jelly-filled donuts can be a major source of mouth burns.
- Puncture plastic pouches and plastic wrap covering before heating. This will reduce the risk of a vapor pressure build up and prevent steam burns.
- Put a cut in potato skins or other vegetables to reduce the risk of “bursting” when you cut into it after it is heated.



#### Children in the kitchen

- Children and kitchens aren't a good mix. Continuous and adequate supervision of children in the kitchen is of prime importance. As a child's mobility and curiosity increase, appropriate supervision becomes essential.
- Keep all hot items at a safe distance from a child by using highchairs, child safety gates, playpens, etc.

- Keep children out of the household traffic path and check for their location before moving any hot or heavy item.
- Remove tablecloths and placemats when toddlers are present. They can tug and pull on everything within their reach. Hot or heavy items can easily be pulled on top of them.
- Never give children pots or pans to play with. Children may reach for this “toy” when it contains hot liquid or food.
- An oven door can get hot enough to burn a youngster who might fall or lean against it. It can be particularly dangerous for a child just learning to walk who may use the door for support. The child is often unable to let go before suffering a burn.
- Be sure children are old enough to understand the safe use of the microwave oven before allowing them to heat foods. Children who are permitted to operate the microwave oven should be tall enough to be able to safely remove items from the oven. One major risk is facial burns, which occur among children whose height puts their face at the level of the heating chamber of the microwave oven.

#### And Remember....

- Test your smoke alarms regularly. Always keep them clean and equipped with fresh batteries. Only a working smoke alarm can help save your life!



For additional information regarding fire safety,  
 Visit the Danville Fire Department on the  
 City of Danville website:  
[www.danville-va.gov](http://www.danville-va.gov)  
 Or Contact the Danville Fire Marshals' Office:  
 434-799-5226

## Tips for Kitchen Fire Safety

Learn how to protect yourself and your family from damaging fires, injuries or loss of life.



**Danville Fire Department**  
**600 Lynn Street**  
**Danville, VA 24541**  
**434-799-5226**