

# Cooking Fires – #1 Cause of Home Fires!



Cooking is a function participated in to some extent nearly every day. But, did you know this common, necessary activity is the leading cause of home fires?

Here are some tips to help make your cooking experiences safe and enjoyable:

Keep an eye on your cooking:

- If you are baking or simmering and have to answer the phone/door, take a large spoon with you or slip on an oven mitt to remind yourself you were cooking.
- When baking or simmering foods take a portable timer with you if you have to complete a task in another area of your home – you may not hear the stove/oven timer.
- Never leave food which you are frying or broiling to answer a door, take a phone call, or for any reason. Turn the stove or oven off and resume frying or broiling when you are ready.

Never wear loose clothing while cooking:

- Push or roll up sleeves.
- Wear short or close fitting sleeves.
- Zip/button sweaters, jackets whose corners could brush over a burner.
- Secure long hair back and/or up.
- Always turn pan handles inward to prevent food spills.
- Never place flammable items such as: towels, curtains, pot holders, food containers, cleaners on or near the stove.
- Keep your stove and oven free of grease and food build up - clean after each use.
- Have a 3 foot child free zone around your stove to avoid bumps, tripping, spills and burns.
- When children are old enough, teach them to cook safely.

In the event of a cooking fire:

- Always keep your pan lid close by. In the event of a small pan fire, slide the lid over the pan, turn the burner off and slide the pan to a cool burner.
- Never carry a burning pan to the sink or outdoors.
- Keep the oven or microwave door shut, to smother the fire, turn off appliance off.
- Extinguish very small oven fires with baking soda – never use flour or water.
- Call 9-1-1 ~ heat from the fire may have transferred into the surrounding walls or cupboards. Let firefighters check it out, it's better for them to come for preventative reasons than for a heat that smolders unnoticed and later ignites into a fire.
- Always have working smoke detectors in your home, test them monthly, and change the batteries twice each year when the time changes take place.

Please contact the North Shore Fire Department Public Education Office at 414-228-0292 or [jglanz@nsfire.org](mailto:jglanz@nsfire.org) , should you have questions.

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