

# MICROWAVE OVENS

## Microwave ovens

Microwave ovens are one of the leading home products associated with scald burn injuries not related to fires.



### Facts and figures

- During 2004-2008, U.S. fire departments responded to an average of 7,000 home\* structure fires per year in which a microwave oven was involved in ignition. These fires caused an annual average of two civilian deaths, 140 civilian injuries and \$22 million in direct property damage.
- One in every five (19%) of microwave oven home structure fires cited appliance housing or casing as the item first ignited.
- Microwave ovens involve more emergency room scald burn injuries than ranges or conventional ovens.
- Nearly half (45%) of the microwave oven injuries seen at emergency rooms in 2009 were scalds.
- Thirty-one percent of the scald burns and 14% of all microwave oven related injuries were scald burns incurred by children under five years of age.

**Source:** NFPA's "[Home Fires Involving Cooking Equipment](#)" report by Marty Ahrens, November 2010.

Also see: [Download a fact sheet on microwave ovens](#). (PDF, 76 KB)

\*Homes are dwellings, duplexes, manufactured homes, apartments, townhouses, rowhouses and condominiums.

*NFPA does not test, label or approve any products.*  
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## NFPA Safety Tips

- ▶ Read the manufacturer's instructions before using a microwave oven.
- ▶ Plug the oven directly into an outlet. Never use an extension cord because it may overload the circuit and cause a fire.
- ▶ Use only microwave-safe cookware (containers or dishes).
- ▶ Open microwaved food slowly, away from the face. Hot steam escaping from a container or the food itself can cause burns.
- ▶ Never use aluminum foil or metal objects in a microwave oven.
- ▶ If you have a fire in your microwave, turn it off immediately and keep the door closed. Never open the door until the fire is completely out. Have the oven checked and/or serviced before being used again.