

Safety Bulletin



Fire Prevention Week

This year's Fire Prevention Week™ campaign, "Cooking Safety starts with YOU. Pay attention to fire prevention™", works to educate everyone about the simple but important actions they can take to keep themselves and those around them safe while cooking.

Here are some simple safety tips:

- Be on alert! If you are sleepy or otherwise impaired, do not use the stove or stovetop.
- Stay in the kitchen while you are frying, boiling, grilling, or broiling food. If you leave the kitchen, turn off the stove.
- If you are simmering, baking, or roasting food, check on it regularly and use a timer to remind you when it's done.
- Keep anything that can catch fire – oven mitts, wooden utensils, food packaging, towels, or curtains – away from your stove top.
- Have a 'kid-free zone' of at least 3 feet (1 metre) around the stove and areas where hot food or drink is prepared or carried.
- Keep a Class K Fire Extinguisher in the kitchen and check on it regularly to ensure it's in good condition.

If you experience a small grease fire and decide to fight the fire:

- On the stovetop, smother the flames by sliding a lid over the pan and turning off the burner. Leave the pan covered until it's completely cooled.
- You can douse the fire with baking soda, salt or use the Class K fire extinguisher as well.
- For an oven fire, turn off the heat and keep the door closed.
- NEVER FIGHT A KITCHEN FIRE WITH WATER.

If you have any doubt about fighting a small fire:

- Just get out! When you leave, close the door behind you to help contain the fire.
- Call 911 or the local emergency number from outside of the home.

Reminder: This is a great time to change the batteries in your smoke alarms, and test them to ensure they're working properly. Inspect any household fire extinguishers and ensure you have a home fire safety plan that is communicated (and practiced) with the entire family.

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Prevention Practices

Keep the stovetop clean. Cooking on a regular basis can lead to build up of substances like leftover food and grease, which can easily catch fire. Wipe up spills and clean the area regularly with white vinegar or any surface cleaner.

- Before events when you know you'll be cooking a lot, give the stovetop and oven a thorough cleaning
- Different stovetops require different deep-cleaning techniques
 - **For glass stovetops:** Use baking soda and a damp towel to soak and loosen the build up before scraping it off
 - **For coil burners:** Remove and scrub the coils as well as the drip pans, or replace the drip pan liners.
 - **For gas burners:** Soak and scrub the grate in soapy water and use a vinegar / water mixture to scrub the cooktop. Use dish soap and a toothbrush to remove any stubborn grease build up.

Cooking Appliance Safety

Slow Cookers – Are designed to cook food by heating the base which transfers up the sides of the vessel to heat the food. These are designed to be left on for long durations while you do other things.

- Keep things that could catch fire away from the slow cooker.
- Make sure the slow cooker is in a location where it won't get bumped. If the lid gets dislodged, the liquid could boil and cause the appliance to overheat and create a fire.

Pressure Cookers – Are designed to cook food faster than a stovetop or oven by using hot steam.

- Place the slow cooker in an open space to give enough room for the steam to ventilate.
- Never cover the steam release valve on the pressure cooker
- Do not leave home when using a pressure cooker.

Air Fryers – Are mini-convection ovens that rapidly circulate hot air throughout the interior.

- Give your air fryer enough space. The air vents release heat and need airflow.
- Do not leave home when using an air fryer.
- Make sure you clean grease and food debris after each use. Unplug and allow to cool completely before cleaning.

Hot Plate, Griddle, and Electric Skillet

- Stay with the hot plate, griddle, or electric skillet when cooking.
- Do not touch the surface of the equipment as it could burn you.
- Unplug the equipment when not in use and before cleaning. Allow the appliance to completely cool before cleaning it.