

# TURKEY FRYING - TAKE NECESSARY PRECAUTIONS

For Release

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The Thanksgiving and Christmas Holiday is just around the corner; a time when family and friends come together to celebrate all it has to offer including a home cooked meal. In the U.S., the number one cause of home fires and injuries are cooking fires. During the winter holiday season, home cooking fires increase with the peak day being Thanksgiving followed by Christmas and Christmas Eve resulting in injuries, deaths and millions of dollars in property damage.

One contributor to holiday fires is turkey frying which remains popular, this time of the year, yet poses a fire and burn hazard for consumers. Retailers anxious to capture the market during this brief and prosperous holiday season, stock their aisles and shelves with turkey fryers. Although the industry has made great strides in the improvement of turkey fryers, the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) states they still are not safe to use due to the amount of oil and high temperatures used to cook a turkey. Even well informed and careful consumers are at risk when using this product. The use of outdoor gas-fueled turkey fryers is discouraged by the NFPA unless used by properly trained professionals such as grocery stores, specialty food retailers and restaurants, who use professional quality equipment. The hazards associated with turkey fryers are:

- Hot oil can spill or splash over onto the flame igniting a fire. This can occur during the cooking process especially when placing the turkey in the fryer or when removing it.
- Fryers designed for outdoor use with or without a stand are prone to collapse causing a major hot oil spill.
- Cooking oil is combustible. If heated beyond its cooking temperature (375°), its vapors can ignite.
- Steam can result from hot cooking oil exposed to snow or rain causing a splattering of the hot oil leading to burns.
- The use of turkey fryers in close quarters poses a burn hazard/danger to children and others in the home. Oil inside a pot can stay dangerously hot for hours after use.
- **DO NOT** use in, on or under a garage, deck, breezeway, porch, barn or any structure that can catch fire.
- Frozen or partially frozen turkeys, when cooked, will cause the hot oil to splatter or produce hot steam leading to burns.
- Should a grease fire occur:
  - **NEVER** use water to extinguish it!
  - Get out and stay out! Once you're safely out of the house, call 911.

Please click on the link to view the hazards of turkey frying <http://www.pwcgov.org/news/pages/the-danger-with-frying-turkeys.aspx>.

### **Additional Safety Tips**

Chief Tim Keen of the Prince William County Fire & Rescue System would like to remind residents that the leading cause of kitchen fires is unattended cooking. Chief Keen urges the community to "Look When You Cook"! "These fires are preventable by simply being more attentive when using cooking materials and equipment."

To keep you and your family safe during the holidays and every day, follow these simple safety tips:

#### *"Look When You Cook"*

- Stay in the kitchen while you are frying, grilling, or broiling food.
  - Turn off the stove, if you leave the kitchen for even a short period of time.
- If you are simmering, baking, roasting, or boiling food, check it regularly, remain in the home while food is cooking, and use a timer to remind you that you are cooking.
- Keep anything that can catch fire away from your stove, i.e. oven mitts, wooden utensils, food packaging, towels or curtains.
- Should a grease fire occur:
  - **NEVER** use water to extinguish it!
  - Get out and stay out! Once you're safely out of the house, call 911.