

November 25, 2013

News Release

*For Immediate Release*

## **Fire Department demonstration encourages safe cooking practices**

In the last year, Springfield Firefighters have responded to nearly 50 fires that started in the kitchen, including 6 in the last 2 months. With Thanksgiving right around the corner, the Fire Department wants all residents to know how to prevent a kitchen fire and what to do if one does start. The Springfield Fire Department will hold a safe cooking demonstration for media on Tuesday, November 26 at 10 a.m. at Station #8 located at 1405 S. Scenic. During the demonstration, we'll show common methods for extinguishing fires, such as using flour or baking soda, and safer alternatives.

According to the National Fire Protection Association, cooking equipment is the leading cause of home structure fires and associated civilian injuries and the third leading cause of home fire deaths. Unattended cooking was by far the leading contributing factor in these fires. Ranges accounted for the largest share (58%) of home cooking fire incidents. Ovens accounted for 16%.

Prevention is the key.

To help prevent a devastating cooking fire, follow these safety tips:

- Stay in the kitchen when you are cooking on the stovetop so you can keep an eye on the food.
- Stay in the home when cooking your turkey and check on it frequently.
- Keep children away from the stove.
- Keep combustibles at least 3 feet away from cooking equipment at all times.
- Make sure your smoke alarms are working. Test them by pushing the test button.

When in doubt, get out!

According to the National Fire Protection Association, three of every five (58%) reported non-fatal home cooking fire injuries occurred when the victims tried to fight the fire themselves. If you feel the fire is small enough to try and put out yourself, make sure you know the proper way to do it. For a small fire in a pan on the stove, use an oven mitt to slide the lid over it and turn off the burner. Leave the lid on until it is completely cool. Never use water to extinguish a stove top fire! For a small fire in the oven, turn off the heat and keep the door closed until the fire goes out. Finally, for a small microwave fire, turn it off and unplug it. Keep the door closed until the fire is completely out.

Most injuries not caused by fire.

In 2009, ranges or ovens were involved in an estimated 17,300 thermal burn injuries seen in U.S. hospital emergency rooms. 90% resulted from contact with the hot equipment or some other non-

fire source. Children under five face a higher risk of non-fire burns associated with cooking than of being burned in a cooking fire. It is best to keep children away from the kitchen while cooking. Minor burns should be treated by running the area under cool water for 3-5 minutes. More severe burns should be seen immediately by a medical professional.

Turkey fryers still a danger.

Turkey fryers have grown in popularity in recent years along with the dangers of using them. If you choose to cook your turkey in a turkey fryer, remember that they should only be used outdoors (not inside or in your garage!). And be sure to follow the manufacturer's instructions, including the type of cooking oil you should use.

For more safety tips, visit the City of Springfield Fire Department's website or the [National Fire Protection Association](#).

For media only: Media is welcome and encouraged to attend our cooking demonstration. For more information, contact Fire and Life Safety Educator Cara Erwin at 864-1699 or [cerwin@springfieldmo.gov](mailto:cerwin@springfieldmo.gov).