

Safety **TIPS** from Assistant Fire Marshal Doug Jones

An information resource for citizens

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Holiday Cooking

The holidays can be hectic at work and at home. With everything that is happening in our lives, it's very easy to forget that you placed that pan on the stove to cook. Then you get sidetracked. You forget about it until the fire starts and the smoke alarm goes off. If you're still home, you need to react quickly.

Dry Cooking Fires

The most common type of cooking fire is the dry cooking fire. The water or moisture boils out of the pan and the food left in the pan scorches, producing smoke. The heat may sometimes damage the surrounding area. The smoke may leave a residue and an odor.

Grease Fires

Grease fires can occur when oil or grease type foods are heated and ignite. A grease fire can do significant damage. Open flames can extend to surrounding cabinets or other combustible items. If unnoticed, a grease fire can extend to a major house fire, engulfing the entire kitchen, adjacent rooms or even the attic. This becomes a dangerous life-threatening fire.

Oven Fires

During an oven fire, the fire is usually contained right in the oven which is designed for high heat anyway. The oven fire usually suffocates or is easily extinguished.

What can you do if there is a kitchen fire?

- In all cases, make sure everyone evacuates the house.
- Call **9-1-1** and report the fire.
- If the fire is still very small, you can use a fire extinguisher to try and put it out. But if the fire gets out of control, get out of the house and wait for firefighters to arrive.

You might be able to extinguish a grease fire on the stove in several different ways. The simplest way is to place a lid on the pan and the fire should suffocate. A large amount of baking soda can also be used to extinguish a grease fire. Once you have the fire extinguished, don't forget to turn off the burner. But if the flames are too high, don't risk getting burned.

Remember, get out and call 9-1-1.

It's not about saving lives; it's about saving your life.