

COOKING IS THE #1 CAUSE OF HOME FIRES

Cooking oil and grease fires are the major cause of residential fires in Canada.

Kitchen fires, due to cooking oil or grease catching fire, cause the fastest-spreading destruction of any kind of residential fire. When cooking with grease or oil it is extremely important that you plan ahead so that you will know to React Fast to Fire. Always use common sense when preparing food.

DEEP FRYING

- The safest way to deep fry foods such as chicken or fries is to use a thermostatically-controlled electric skillet or a deep fat fryer.

PAN FRYING

- **Keep a pan lid or cookie sheet** handy in case the grease or oil catches fire. The lid or pan can be slid over the top of the pan to smother the fire.
- **Never attempt to move a flaming pot or pan** away from the stove. The movement can fan the flames and spread the fire, and the pan will likely be very hot causing you to drop it. In both cases, you are placing yourself at great risk. Your immediate actions should be to smother the fire by sliding a lid or flat cookie sheet over the pan. Then turn off the heat and exhaust fan and allow the pan to cool. Most importantly, you must know when to go and react fast to this type of fire because grease fires spread very quickly.

OVEN COOKING

- Keep oven clean. Grease and food splatters can ignite at high temperatures.
- Ensure that you wear oven mitts when removing cooking containers to avoid serious burns.
- Follow the oven cooking instructions for the recipe or product you are using.
- Broiling is a popular method of cooking. When you use your broiler, place the rack 5 to 8 cm (two to three inches) from the broiler element. Always place a drip pan beneath the broiler rack to catch the fat drippings. Never use aluminum foil for this purpose - the fat gathered in the foil could catch fire or spill over.

MICROWAVE COOKING

Microwave ovens are a marvelous time saving tool, but there are three characteristics of microwave cooking you should remember:

- The heat is reflected by the metal interior,
- Heat can pass through glass, plastic and other materials, and
- Heat is absorbed by the food.

Foods, like those with high fat or sugar content, may heat very rapidly but feel cool to touch. Pastry fillings can be very hot but the crust cooler. Milk in baby bottles could be boiling but the bottle not hot to touch. Use caution at all times.

Do not use tin foil or any other metal objects in the microwave. If a fire occurs, keep the door closed and unplug the unit. Call a qualified maintenance person to ensure it is in proper working order before using the microwave again.