

Protecting Our Parishes, Missions, and Schools

Safety Tips for Kitchen Fires

Accident Data

- Three in ten home fires start in the kitchen, more than in any other room in the house.
- In an average year, there were an estimated 156,500 kitchen fires, which killed 331 people, injured nearly 5,000 others, and damaged \$876 million worth of property.
- Cooking causes nearly 90% of all kitchen fires. The primary factor is unattended cooking.
- In 55% of the fires, there was either no smoke alarm or it didn't work.

Do's and Don'ts

- Don't leave food that is cooking on the stove top unattended.
- Especially dangerous are pans of hot grease when frying food. Grease fires can travel to curtains and cabinets, quickly producing a major fire. When frying or heating oil, make sure the pot or pan has a lid and that the lid is handy. Cover a burning pan with a lid.
- You can use a large amount of baking soda to extinguish a grease fire.
- If the flames are too high, don't risk getting burned. Call 9-1-1 and get out of the house.
- Never put water on a grease fire. It will splatter the grease and actually spread the flames.
- Don't try to carry a pan of flaming grease outside. It is too easy to spill, which means you can burn yourself or anyone nearby, or spread the fire to other parts of the kitchen.
- Make sure the pilot lights always work.
- Clean up grease.
- Regularly clean or replace vent screens.
- Don't smoke in the kitchen.
- Know the location, type and purpose of your fire extinguisher.
- Avoid wearing loose clothing that can get caught in flames or appliances.

- Use an approved fire extinguisher or baking soda to put out small flames.
- If anyone's clothing catches fire, the rule is to stop, drop and roll.
- Keep the handles of pots and pans pointed toward the back of the stove top.
- When using a gas stove, turn off the flame before stirring, turning or flipping food. Turn it back on when you're finished. If the stove is electric, warn children that it will stay hot, even after it has been turned off.
- Don't let anyone but adults put things in an oven or take them out.
- Never leave a child alone when cooking or when an electrical appliance is within reach.
- Talk to children about precautions in simple, clear terms. Young children need frequent reminders.
- Never leave appliance cords hanging from countertops.
- Keep flammable objects (kitchen towels, cookbooks and curtains) at least three feet from the stove top.



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