

# Cooking Fire and Burn Safety



**Cooking is the #1 cause of home fires and home fire injuries in Massachusetts.**

*Each year, there are thousands of cooking fires in Massachusetts. The fires result in deaths, injuries and millions of dollars in damages. Cooking fires are a leading cause of fire injuries every year in Massachusetts.*

## **Cooking Safety Tips**

- Put a lid on a grease fire to smother it, then turn off the heat. Baking soda also works.
- Never move a burning pan. You can be badly burned or spread the fire.
- Never use water or a fire extinguisher on a grease fire. Water spreads the fire and the force of an extinguisher can splash flaming grease out of the pan.
- Stand by your pan. Don't leave anything cooking on the stovetop unattended.
- Wear short or tight fitting sleeves when cooking. Loose fitting clothing can easily catch fire.
- If your clothing catches fire, STOP, DROP & ROLL to put out the flames. Put burns in cool running water. Call 9-1-1 for help.
- Keep pot handles turned inward to prevent accidental spills of hot contents.
- Create a three-foot "child-free zone" around the stove. Keep children and pets away from the stove while cooking to prevent burns and scalds.
- Keep combustible objects like pot holders, towels, bags, and packaging away from heating elements.
- For fires inside an oven or microwave, keep the door closed, turn off the appliance, and call 9-1-1.
- Don't put metal into a microwave. Utensils, aluminum foil or twist-tie wraps can arc and cause a fire.
- Microwaved food and liquid can get very hot. Use caution to avoid scalds.
- Unplug appliances such as toasters and coffee makers when not in use.
- Don't store things in the oven.

**Covering a pan fire with a lid is the safest way to put out a fire.**

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## Facts About Cooking Fires

- Unattended cooking is the most frequent cause of cooking fires.
- The majority of victims injured in fires are hurt while attempting to fight the fire. Leave firefighting to trained professionals.
- In the event of a fire, leave the building immediately and call 9-1-1. All fires and burns, regardless of size, should be reported to your local fire department.
- A working smoke alarm can double a family's chances of surviving a fire.
- Test your smoke and CO alarms monthly. Change the batteries when you change your clocks. Replace smoke alarms 10 years old or older with new, sealed 10 year alarms.
- Don't disable smoke alarms to avoid false alarms while cooking. Relocate the alarm or replace it with a photoelectric type to minimize nuisance alarms from cooking.

## Resources to Share

DFS has a toolkit of educational materials on cooking safety. Visit [www.mass.gov/dfs](http://www.mass.gov/dfs) and search for *cooking fire safety toolkit*. Watch videos, download materials to share, and learn more.



The Department of Fire Services' Fire Data and Public Education Unit manages public fire and life safety education programs including the Student Awareness of Fire Education (S.A.F.E.) program and the Senior SAFE program. The unit provides technical assistance is provided to local fire departments, health educators, medical and public health professionals, classroom teachers, elder service providers, community and service organizations and others interested in fire and life safety education.

