

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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STAY SAFE WHILE COOKING THIS THANKSGIVING

JACKSON, Miss. – Thanksgiving is the peak day for home cooking fires, according to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). Unattended cooking has caused seven fire deaths in Mississippi so far in 2023. There were three cooking-related fire deaths in 2022.

“Make your home safer by installing multiple smoke alarms,” said Insurance Commissioner and State Fire Marshal Mike Chaney. “Many people have family and friends over for the holiday. Don’t let distractions put you and your guests in danger.”

Use these safety tips from the State Fire Marshal’s Office when preparing your Thanksgiving meal:

- If you must leave the kitchen for even a short amount of time, turn off the stove.
- Avoid wearing loose clothing or dangling sleeves while cooking. Loose clothing can catch fire if it gets too close to a gas flame or electric burner.
- Keep kids away from cooking areas by enforcing a "kid-free zone" of 3 feet around the stove.
 - If you have young children, use the stove's back burners whenever possible.
 - Turn pot handles inward to reduce the risk that pots will be knocked over.
 - Never hold a small child while cooking.

If you have a fire

- Just get out! When you leave, close the door behind you to help contain the fire.
- Call 911 after you leave. Be sure others are getting out and you have a clear way out.
- Keep a lid nearby to smother small grease fires, pan and pot fires. Smother the fire by sliding the lid over the pan and turn off the stovetop. Leave the pan covered until it is completely cooled.
- For an oven fire, turn off the heat and keep the door closed.

If using a turkey fryer

- Fryers should be used outdoors, a safe distance from buildings and any other flammable materials.
 - Some turkey fryers are designed for indoor use. If you use one of these, follow manufacturer directions carefully.
- Never use a fryer in a garage or on a wooden deck.
- Make sure fryers are used on a flat surface to reduce accidental tipping.
- Never leave the fryer unattended. If you do not watch the fryer carefully, the oil will continue to heat until it catches fire.
- The U.S. Dept. of Agriculture recommends you thaw a turkey 24 hours for every 4 to 5 pounds.
- Keep an all-purpose fire extinguisher nearby. Never use water to extinguish a grease fire.
- The Mississippi State Fire Marshal’s Office recommends, when using a propane fryer, using a hose at least 6 feet long to distance the propane tank from the fryers flame.

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