



Cooking Fires Are Preventable



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Cooking fires are the leading cause of fires, fire injuries and fire deaths in Orange County. Given their frequency, the Orange County Fire Authority believes that more are happening but not being reported.

Over the past five years (2004-2008), cooking fires occurred almost every three days. There have been 546 cooking fires leading to 42 injuries, four deaths and nearly \$8 million in damage. One in every four fire deaths in OCFA's service area is the result of a cooking fire.

These fires cause a sizeable amount of property damage. On average, a cooking fire causing \$10,000 or more occurs more than once a month. Residents should be aware of the essential precautions when cooking, particularly when using ovens.



Did You Know:

- 20-to-29 year old adults are most frequently injured. Their injuries represent one-third of all cooking fire injuries.
- Older adults (70 or older) are also at risk as they have the highest per capita injury rate.
- A range or cooking surface was involved in 327 reported fires.
- An oven or rotisserie was involved in 126 reported fires.
- A grill, hibachi or BBQ was involved in 12 reported fires.
- Microwave ovens were involved in 16 reported fires.

Things to Remember

- Never use water on a grease fire.
- Turn the handles of pots and pans inward to prevent them from being pulled or knocked off the stove.
- Keep household items away from the stove.
- Clean up grease or cooking oil spills.

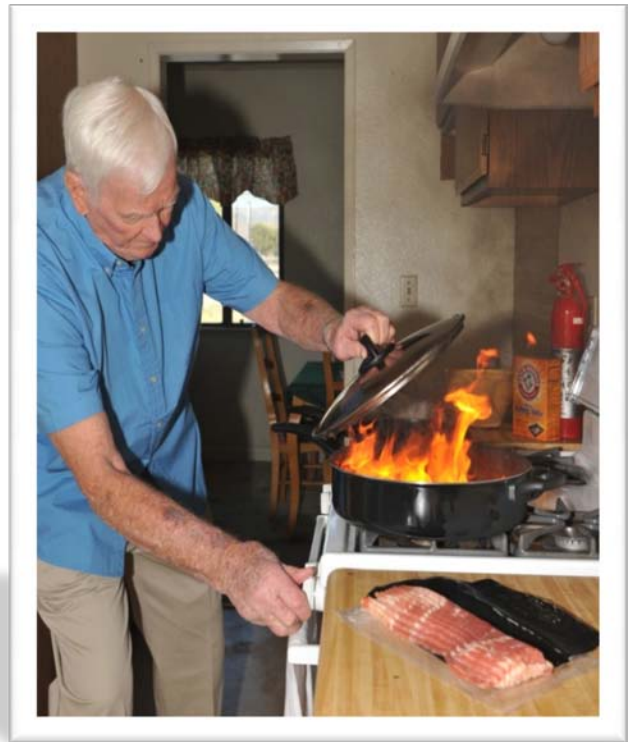
Unattended cooking is the leading cause of household fires and fire injuries.

A photograph of a fire extinguisher and a box of baking powder. The fire extinguisher is a standard ABC type, and the box is labeled "Baking Powder". The text is overlaid on the image.

How to Prevent Cooking Fires

- Stay in the kitchen while you are frying, grilling or broiling food. If you must leave the kitchen, turn the stove off.
- If you are simmering, baking, roasting or boiling food, check it regularly, remain in the home while it is cooking and use a timer to remind you that you are cooking.
- You are at a higher risk of a cooking fire if you are sleepy or have consumed alcohol.
- Keep items such as pot holders, towels and food packaging away from cooking surfaces.
- Keep the cooking surfaces clean and free of grease and oil spills, including the oven.
- Wear short, close fitting, tightly rolled sleeves when cooking.

Always maintain a three-foot "Kid Free – Pet Free Zone" around the stove and areas where hot food or drinks are prepared or carried.



In Case of a Cooking Fire Put a Lid on It!

- If you try to fight the fire, be sure others are getting out and that you have a safe way out.
- Keep a lid nearby whenever you are cooking to smother **small** fires. Smother the fire by carefully sliding the lid over the pan and turn off the stove.
- Keep the pan covered until it is completely cooled (20-30 minutes).
- Only move the pan when it has cooled off. You can spread the fire or burn yourself if the pan and contents are still hot.
- For an oven or microwave fire, turn the oven off and keep the door closed.

If the fire is growing, get out, close the door behind you and call 9-1-1 after you leave.