

# FACT SHEET



## Home Cooking

A Consumer Guide for Anyone Who Cooks at Home.

Your kitchen is the heart of the Home, but it is also the most likely place for fire, electrical or other hazards to be found. If you have spent any time in the kitchen you've most likely been burned, cut or poisoned in some way. Because the potential for accidents is so prevalent, the following tips may help.



### Did you know these facts?

- ⊙ Cooking is a leading cause of home injury accidents. It is also the leading cause of fire injuries.
- ⊙ Deaths due to fires caused by cooking are particularly preventable.
- ⊙ Having a working fire alarm reduces one's chance of dying in a fire by nearly half.
- ⊙ 82% of all fire deaths occur in the home.

Following these simple safety tips can boost survival rates dramatically. Remember, knowledge and practice are your best protection.



### Cooking Fires Life-Saving Tips

- ⊙ Weather gas or electric; learn how your particular range or stove, cook-top, oven and or microwave oven operate.
- ⊙ Never leave the stove or oven turned on or leave cooking unattended. A serious fire can start in just seconds.

**Serious Safety tip:** Pan and pot *handles* are to be turned in from the stoves edge.

- ⊙ Always wear short, tight-fitting sleeves and an apron when cooking.
- ⊙ Keep towels, potholders, curtains, paper products, plastics and *flowing hair* away from flames and heating elements.
- ⊙ Clean cooking surfaces regularly to prevent grease build-up or grime, which can ignite.
- ⊙ If a fire breaks out while cooking, put a lid or wet clothe on the pan to **smother it - turn heat off - let cool.**

**Serious Safety tip:** When cooking oil at high temps, give it your full attention. Grease, oils, and fats are the ignition point for most stove top fires. The hotter they get the more dangerous they become.

- ⊙ Never throw water on a grease fire.
- ⊙ Heat oil gradually to avoid burns from spattering grease.
- ⊙ Use extra caution when preparing deep-fried or wet foods.
- ⊙ Never use the range or oven to heat your home.
- ⊙ Double-check the kitchen before you go to bed or leave the house.
- ⊙ Make sure all small appliances are turned off and unplugged.

**Serious Safety tip:** Keep a UL approved ABC Fire Extinguisher near.



## ***More Cooking Safety tips: For your convenience!***

- Make sure you have a working smoke alarm in your kitchen. Test it every month and replace it every 10 years.
- Don't store foods or tools where it is necessary to reach across or above the range to collect them. This hazardous practice puts the cook in jeopardy for fluid, steam and open flame burns. Steam is especially dangerous because when it is the hottest... it's invisible.
- Never place a glass casserole or lid on the stove or over a burner. If it gets hot and explodes, it can send glass shards flying in every direction as well as towards the cook.
- Use well insulated potholders and oven mitts. Mitts and potholders will prevent burns if they are dry. Get a dry one if the one you're using gets wet. Water conducts heat directly to your hand through the insulation. Never use towels in place of a mitt or potholder - burns may result.
- Prevent cross-contamination of foods. Never prepare raw meat where it can come in contact with cooked foods or fresh vegetable salad preparations.

## ***Garbage Disposals and Appliances***

- Turn the power to the garbage disposal off before you try to get something out of it. Tools before hands... Is a great rule to follow!
- Never overload electrical circuits. One appliance per outlet is the good rule of thumb.
- Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters (GFI's), should be installed, by an electrician, near sinks and water sources.
- Repair or replace any appliance with a faulty wiring or frayed electrical cords.

## ***Sharps***

- Keep your knives sharpened. They will work more efficiently and you'll be less likely to cut yourself. Should you drop a knife, quickly step back and let it fall. Never try to catch it.
- Use appropriate cutting surfaces and always cut away from yourself - keep fingers tucked in.
- If you break something, dispose of the glass carefully. Pick up the large pieces and sweep the smaller pieces. Use a damp paper towel to do the last small shard cleanup. Do not use a wash cloth or towel for shard cleanup, the shards may stay in the cloth even during washing which places someone else in danger of a glass cut later.
- Keep a well-stocked first aid kit near to your **fire extinguisher** and know how to use them.