



OCEANSIDE FIRE DEPARTMENT

COOKING AND FIRE SAFETY

As you plan your holiday menu, be aware of fire safety. Did you know that the number of home fires double during the holidays?

Turkey:

If you're roasting your turkey, make sure you set a timer. This way, you won't forget about the bird as you visit with your loved ones. If you're frying your turkey:

- Use a fryer with thermostat controls. This will ensure the oil does not become over heated.
- Thaw your turkey completely. Ice on the bird will cause the oil to splatter. Make sure you dry a wet turkey before placing it in the hot oil.
- Don't overfill the pot with oil.
- Keep children and pets at least three feet away from the fryer.
- Also, always use the fryer outdoors.

Stuffing and Potatoes:

Stand by your stove when you're boiling your potatoes or frying onions for stuffing. If you're in the kitchen, it is easier to catch hazardous conditions before they become a fire.

Vegetables:

- Keep the area around the stove clear of packaging, paper towels, and dish cloths--anything that can burn.
- Be prepared. Keep a large pan lid or baking sheet handy in case you need to smother a pan fire.
- Turn pot handles towards the back of the stove so you don't bump them.

DECORATING AND FIRE SAFETY

Before crawling up on the roof to string lights, be aware that every year, hospital emergency rooms treat about 12,500 people for injuries like falls, cuts and shocks related to holiday lights, decorations and Christmas trees, according to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC).

In addition, candles start about 11,600 fires each year, resulting in deaths, injuries and millions in property loss. Christmas trees are involved in about 300 home fires annually, resulting in 10 deaths, 30 injuries and an average of more than \$10 million in property loss and damage.

Christmas Trees:

- When purchasing an artificial tree, look for the label "Fire Resistant." The label does not mean the tree won't catch fire, but it does indicate the tree will resist burning and should extinguish quickly.
- When buying a live tree, check for freshness. A fresh tree is green, needles are hard to pull from branches and do not break when bent between your fingers. The trunk butt of a fresh tree is sticky with resin, and when tapped on the ground, the tree should not lose many needles.
- When setting up a tree at home, place it away from fireplaces and radiators. Because heated rooms dry live trees out rapidly, be sure to keep the stand filled with water.

Holiday Lights:

- Indoors or outside, use only lights that have been tested for safety by a recognized testing laboratory, which indicates conformance with safety standards. Use only lights that have fused plugs.



- Check each set of lights, new or old, for broken or cracked sockets, frayed wires, or loose connections, and throw out damaged sets. Always replace burned-out bulbs promptly with the same wattage bulbs.
- Use no more than three standard-size sets of lights per single extension cord. Make sure the extension cord is rated for the intended use.
- Never use electric lights on a metallic tree. The tree can become charged with electricity from faulty lights, and a person touching a branch could be electrocuted.
- Before using lights outdoors, check labels to be sure they have been certified for outdoor use.
- Stay away from power or feeder lines leading from utility poles into older homes.
- Use only insulated staples to hold strings in place, not nails or tacks. Or, run strings of lights through hooks available at hardware stores.
- Turn off all holiday lights when you go to bed or leave the house. The lights could short out and start a fire.
- Outdoor electric lights and decorations should be plugged into circuits protected by ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs). Portable outdoor GFCIs can be purchased where electrical supplies are sold. GFCIs can be installed permanently to household circuits by a qualified electrician.

Holiday Decorations:

- Use only non-combustible or flame-resistant materials to trim a tree.
- Never use lighted candles on a tree or near other evergreens. Always use non-flammable holders, and place candles where they will not be knocked down.

Fireplaces:

- Do not burn wrapping paper in the fireplace. A flash fire may result as wrappings ignite suddenly and burn intensely.

Have a safe & happy holiday season!