

## COOKING SAFETY

Cooking fires are the #1 cause of home fires and home fire injuries. The majority of cooking equipment fires start with the ignition of common household items (i.e. wall coverings, paper or plastic bags, curtains, etc.).

### Facts & Figures

- \* Every 27 minutes someone is killed or injured in a home fire.
- \* About 79% of all fire deaths occur in the home.
- \* In 1999, approximately 383,000 residential fires killed about 2,900 people and injured another 16,050 in the United States.
- \* Residential fires result in direct property damage of roughly \$5 billion each year.
- \* Preventing fire-related injuries costs far less than treating them: \$1 spent on smoke alarms can save \$69 in fire-related cost.

### Safety Tips:

- \* Never leave cooking food on the stovetop unattended, and keep a close eye on food cooking inside the oven.
- \* Keep cooking areas clean and clear of combustibles (i.e. potholders, towels, rags, drapes, and food packages).
- \* Keep children and pets away from cooking areas by creating a three-foot (one meter) "kid-free zone" round the stove.
- \* Turn pot handles inward so they can't be bumped and children can't grab them.
- \* Wear short, close fitting or tightly rolled sleeves when cooking. Loose clothing dangles onto stove burners and catch fire.
- \* NEVER use a wet oven mitt, as it presents a scald danger if the moisture in the mitt is heated.
- \* Always keep a potholder, oven mitt and lid handy. If a small grease fire starts in a pan, put on an oven mitt and smother the flames by carefully sliding the lid over the pan. Turn off the burner. Don't remove the lid until it is completely cool. Never pour water on a grease fire and never discharge a fire extinguisher onto a pan fire, as it can spray or shoot burning grease around the kitchen, actually spreading the fire.
- \* If there is an oven fire, turn off the heat and keep the door closed to prevent flames from burning you and your clothing.
- \* If there is a microwave fire, keep the door closed and unplug the microwave. Call the fire department and make sure to have the oven serviced before you use it again. Food cooked in a microwave can be dangerously hot. Remove the lids or other coverings from microwaved food carefully to prevent steam burns.

National Fire Protection Agency