

Prevent Cooking Fires: Watch What You Heat

The Office of State Fire Marshal reminds us that **most home fires start in the kitchen.** Cooking fires are one of the leading causes of residential fires in Oregon.

From 2001-2005, cooking-related fires in Oregon caused 144 injuries and more than \$9.1 million in property loss.

A moment's inattention can lead to a deadly and destructive kitchen fire—the phone rings and you answer, forgetting dinner cooking on the stove; your toddler fusses and you go to help while the oil you were heating overheats and flames up; you start water for tea and go check your e-mail while the kettle on the stove boils dry. People lead busy lives and

it's easy to get distracted.

In fact, Oregon data shows that the most frequent cause of cooking fires is “source of heat unattended.” Nationally, unattended cooking is the leading cause of cooking fires in the home. A U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission study found that the cook was outside the kitchen for six of seven fires studied.

SAFETY TIPS

- Keep a close eye on what you're cooking—never leave cooking food unattended.
- Keep your cooking area clean, including the stove-top, oven and exhaust fan.
- Keep dishtowels and pot-holders away from the burners on the stove.

- Watch your sleeves: loose sleeves over hot stove burners can melt, ignite, or catch on the handles of pots and pans.
- Cooking oil can ignite quickly. Heat oil slowly and watch it closely.
- Keep a fire extinguisher in your kitchen in an easy-to-reach location and know how to use it.

IF YOU HAVE A FIRE

- **NEVER** throw water on an oil or grease fire. Water causes these fires to explode as the burning material stays on top of the water, causing it to spread and putting you at severe risk of getting burned.
- Don't attempt to carry a

burning pan out of the house. This can spread the fire and increases your chances of getting burned.

- Do turn off the burner to remove the heat source.
- Slowly and carefully slide a lid over the burning pan from the side to rob the fire of air. If you don't have a lid for the pan, a cookie sheet or pizza pan will work.
- If fire breaks out in your oven, turn off the heat and keep the door closed.
- If fire continues to grow, leave the home and call 9-1-1.

OPEN BURNING INFORMATION

Regulations for burning of residential yard debris have been established by the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) for the Mid-Willamette Valley.

Open burning of yard debris is authorized during two periods (Mar 1-Jun 15 and Oct 1-Dec 15). The fall season may be delayed by extended dry weather, but usually opens after the first substantial rains have fallen.

Yard debris is classified as:

- Grass clippings
- Tree leaves and needles
- Small branches
- Rose bush clippings
- Paper and cardboard

Open burning is allowed only on approved burn days

set by the DEQ. Call 503-769-3400 daily for burn info.

Open burning includes any burning conducted outdoors. A fire in a burn barrel is open burning, as is burning debris in an outdoor fire-place or backyard incinerator.

It's *against the law* to conduct any open burning that:

- Is not attended by a responsible person
- Unreasonably interferes with enjoyment of life or property
- Creates a public or private nuisance
- Is a hazard to public safety

DEQ regulations prohibit open burning of the following materials:

- Rubber products, incl. tires
- Plastic
- Wet garbage & food waste
- Petroleum and petroleum-treated materials
- Asphalt and asbestos
- Wire insulation
- Automobile parts
- Animal remains
- Any material that produces dense smoke or noxious odors

Please help us control unneeded responses by only burning authorized materials. Don't risk a fine and be a good neighbor by burning responsibly. For additional info, call 503-769-3282.

Station Tours

Have you ever wondered what goes on at a fire station? Would you like to find out? Go on a station tour. You can get a look at the equipment and protective gear used by firefighters or take a look inside a fire engine.

If you have a kids group that would like to visit the station, we can provide a tour combined with prevention education. Everyone leaves with a plastic fire helmet and Sublimity Fire District sticker badge.

The fire district provides station tours during regular business hours, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. Mon-Fri. **Please phone ahead to schedule.**

Have a Fire-Safe Holiday Season

The holidays are a wonderful time of year, unless tragedy strikes. Decorative lights, candles and Christmas trees can all become fire hazards. The Office of State Fire Marshal urges everyone to follow these important tips to help ensure a fire safe holiday season.

CANDLES:

- Keep lit candles away from trees, evergreen clippings, decorations, presents, & wrapping paper.
- Place candles in a sturdy fire-proof candle holder where they cannot be knocked over.
- Make sure all candles are out before going to bed or leaving the house.

TREE CARE:

- Choose a fresh tree with a natural, deep green color and flexible needles.

- Cut off about two (2) inches of the tree trunk at an angle to expose fresh wood for better water absorption.
- Water the tree every day. An average tree may consume between a quart and a gallon of water per day. If the water level drops below the cut end of the tree, a seal will form on the cut and the tree will not be able to absorb any more water.
- Keep the tree away from all sources of heat to preserve its freshness. Miniature lights are a better decoration choice than standard-sized lights. The cooler miniature lights do not dry the tree needles as quickly.
- When the needles get brittle or dull and begin to fall from the tree, it's time to get rid of it.

LIGHTS:

- Use only lights that are UL approved. Check every set of lights for broken or cracked sockets, frayed or bare wires, and loose connections before using. Throw away anything that is not in perfect condition.
- Never use electric lights on a metallic tree. The tree can become charged with electricity from faulty lights and cause electrocution. Use colored spotlights as an alternative.
- Use no more than three (3) sets of lights per single extension. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for the number of light strings in one circuit.
- Always turn off all tree lights and decorations before you go to bed or leave your home.

Address Signs Help Us Get There Faster

Visualize driving through a residential neighborhood or down a road late at night attempting to locate a specific address. Compound your frustration by placing yourself in the driver's seat of a fire engine or a rescue unit responding to an emergency where seconds may mean the difference between life and death.

This frustration is something experienced all too often by fire personnel due to the fact that many people don't clearly mark their homes or don't provide an address marking at all.

Failure to provide clear address markings may be inviting disaster in the event of an emergency where seconds might make the difference.

Depending on the location of your home (rural or residential), fire departments suggest the following

methods of marking your address:

RURAL

*For a single driveway off a main road, affix your address to a post at the entrance to your driveway.

RESIDENTIAL

*Paint four-inch numbers on the curbing in front of your home.

*Place numbers that are at least four (4) inches tall near the front entrance (or a location easily visible from the street) in a color in contrast to the color of your home (i.e., light numbers on a dark background.)

*For apartments and other buildings with multiple occupancies, mark each separate occupant's number.

*For a single driveway leading to multiple driveways for individual

residences, affix the addresses of all residences to a post at the entrance of the main driveway. At the intersection of individual driveways, affix addresses with arrows pointing toward individual residences.

Remember, next time the emergency might be yours. Proper addressing will assist the fire department in dealing with your emergency more quickly.

The fire district provides reflective address signs for a fee of \$15. Included in the price is the cost of the materials to make the sign, a signpost, and installation of the sign at an appropriate spot by qualified district personnel.

If you are interested in obtaining a reflective address sign, please call the fire district at 503-769-3282. Help us help you.