More cooking fires are reported on Thanksgiving than any other day of the year, followed by Christmas and Christmas Eve.

Whether you’re baking cookies or preparing a family feast, following a few safety tips will help you spend time with loved ones, not firefighters, in the kitchen this holiday season.

- Stay in the kitchen when frying, grilling, or broiling food. Unattended cooking is the leading cause of home cooking fires.
- Check food often while cooking. If you’re entertaining guests, use a timer to remind you that the stove or oven is on.
- Wear short, close fitting, or tightly rolled sleeves when cooking.
- Keep cooking areas clear. Pot holders, paper towels, wooden utensils, and even cookbooks can be fire hazards if left too close to the stove, oven, or other kitchen appliances.
- Clean cooking surfaces regularly to prevent grease buildup.
- Make sure children and pets stay at least three feet from the oven, stove, hot food, and hot liquids.
- Test your smoke alarms, and never disable them while cooking.

It’s important to know what to do if a fire starts in your kitchen. A quick and safe response can allow you to put a small fire out before it has a chance to spread.

- If there’s a fire on the stove, cover the pan with the lid and turn off the stove. Never try to move the pan to the sink, and NEVER pour water on a grease fire.
- If there’s a fire in the oven or microwave, keep the door closed and turn off the appliance.
- A multipurpose (A-B-C) fire extinguisher can also be used on a small cooking fire but only if it’s not spreading, smoke and heat have not filled the area, and you have a clear escape path.