



CITY OF COLONIAL HEIGHTS

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Department of Fire, EMS, & Emergency Management

MEDIA RELEASE

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SAFE COOKING THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

Colonial Heights Fire and EMS would like everyone to have a safe holiday season. With holiday meals being prepared for family gatherings, the fire department would like everyone to know that cooking fires are the leading cause of fires in the home. The National Fire Protection Association reports that 41% percent of all residential fires occur in the kitchen. Thirty-six percent of fire fatalities are because of a kitchen fire. Colonial Heights is no different. This year the fire department has reported five cooking related fires. In 2008, we had 13 cooking related fires with six of those occurring between October and December. However, you can prevent the fire and have a safe and wonderful holiday.

By following simple safety rules, you can be safe:

- Stay in the kitchen while you are frying, grilling, or broiling food. If you leave the kitchen for even a short period, turn off the stove.

- If you are simmering, baking, roasting, or boiling food, check it regularly, remain in the home while food is cooking, and use a timer to remind you that you are cooking.
- Keep anything that can catch fire — oven mitts, wooden utensils, food packaging, towels or curtains — away from your stovetop.
- Keep hot foods and liquids away from tables and counter edges so they cannot be pulled or knocked over.
- Have a 3-foot “kid-free” zone around the stove.
- Never hold a child in your arms while preparing hot food or drinking a hot beverage.
- Wear short or close-fitting sleeves when cooking.

If you have a cooking fire, remember:

- Just get out! When you leave, close the door behind you to help contain the fire.
- Call 9-1-1, even if you think the fire is out.
- If you try to fight the fire, be sure others are getting out and you have a clear way out.
- Use an A B C or B C Fire Extinguisher, never use water.
- Keep a lid nearby when you are cooking to smother small grease fires. Smother the fire by sliding the lid over the pan and turn off the stovetop. Leave the pan covered until it is completely cooled.
- For an oven fire turn off the heat and keep the door closed.

For more information visit the National Fire Protection Association website at www.nfpa.org or contact Deputy Fire Marshal J. E. Boisseau at 804-520-9376 or at boisseauj@colonial-heights.com.