

Kitchen Fires

The primary cause of kitchen fires is the improper use of cooking appliances. If any fire in your home does not extinguish immediately, leave the house and call the fire department from another location.

Grease fires

The use of a pot or frying pan to cook french fries is one of the most common causes of kitchen fires. Always use a government approved, thermostatically-controlled appliance for deep-frying. This appliance, when used correctly, will not exceed the ignition temperature of cooking oil. The cost of the appliance is much less than the replacement cost of your home or your life!

When cooking with grease, you need to be extra careful. Keep a pot cover handy in case the grease catches on fire. Never put water on a grease fire – it will cause the fire to flare up. Smother the fire by sliding a cover or flat cookie sheet over the pot. Turn off the heat and allow the pot to cool.

Never try to move a burning pot – the motion can fan the flames and spread the fire.

Range hoods should be properly installed and vented. If the hood is vented into a wall or the attic, grease

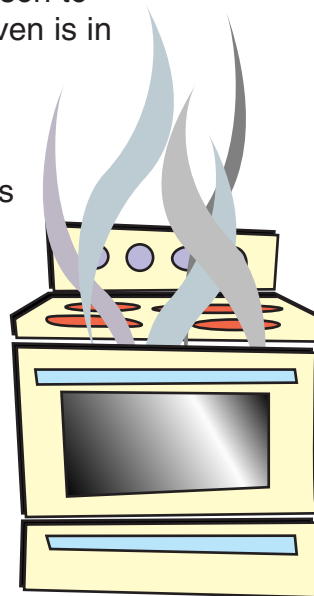
could build up, causing a fire hazard. This model of hood should be vented to the outside. Internally vented range hoods with charcoal filters should be cleaned and the filters replaced regularly.

It is important to keep your cooking area clean. Cooking oil creates vapours that collect on kitchen surfaces, such as cupboards, counters and curtains. This vapour build-up would act as fuel to a fire in the kitchen.

Oven fires

If the oven catches on fire, leave the door closed and turn off the heat. Allow the oven to cool. Call a qualified maintenance person to make sure the oven is in working order before using it again.

If the fire does not go out, leave right away and call the fire department from a neighbour's house.



Microwave oven fires

Microwave ovens are a marvellous, time-saving tool. If they are not used properly, however, they can be a hazard.

There are three characteristics of microwave cooking:

- The heat is reflected by the metal interior;
- The heat can pass through glass, plastic and other materials;
- The heat is absorbed by the food.

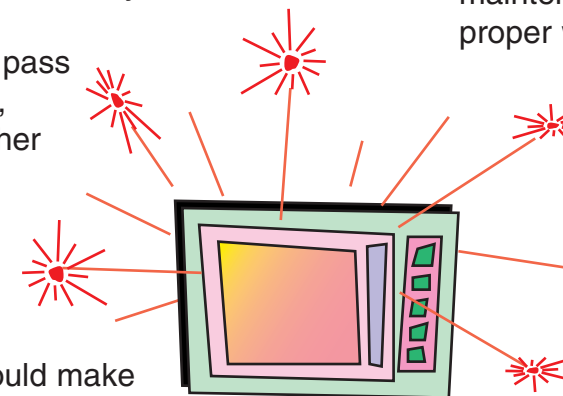
These characteristics could make microwave cooking more hazardous because all food is not cooked at the same rate. Some foods, like those with high fat or sugar content, may heat very rapidly but feel cool to the touch. Pastry filling could be very hot, but the crust could be cooler. Milk in baby bottles could be boiling, but the bottle might not feel hot to the touch.

Cool any burn with cold water and seek medical attention. It is especially important to see a doctor if there are burns to the inside of the mouth.

Fires can occur when sparks

reflected by metal in the microwave ignite combustibles inside, such as spilled food or paper towels.

Do not use tinfoil or any other metal substance in the microwave. If a fire occurs, keep the door closed and unplug the unit. Before using the microwave again, call a qualified maintenance person to ensure it is in proper working order.



Install an all-purpose (ABC) fire extinguisher near an exit door. Follow manufacturer's instructions for its use. If the fire does not go out right away, leave the building and contact the fire department.

