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FIRE DEPARTMENT

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THANKSGIVING SAFETY TIPS TO KEEP HOLIDAY SAFE

Muscatine Fire Department seeks to ensure safe and enjoyable holiday season

MUSCATINE, Iowa —

Thanksgiving is one of the busiest—and most hazardous—days of the year for home cooking fires. As Muscatine families prepare for their holiday gatherings, the Muscatine Fire Department is urging residents to take simple precautions to protect their homes and loved ones.



According to the National Fire Protection Association, Thanksgiving consistently ranks as the peak day for home cooking fires, with unattended cooking as the leading cause. With multiple dishes on the stove, guests arriving, and distractions common, the risk of a kitchen fire increases significantly.

To help ensure a safe and enjoyable holiday, the Muscatine Fire Department encourages residents to follow these Thanksgiving fire safety tips:

"I remember Muscatine for its sunsets. I have never seen any on either side of the ocean that equaled them " — Mark Twain



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In the Kitchen

- Stay in the kitchen when cooking on the stovetop. If you must step away, turn off the burner.
- Check the turkey frequently if roasting in the oven, and use a timer as a reminder.
- Keep children and pets at least 3 feet away from stoves, ovens, and hot appliances.
- Keep flammable materials—dish towels, packaging, wooden utensils—away from heat sources.
- Test smoke alarms before cooking begins to ensure they are working properly.

Using Turkey Fryers

Outdoor turkey fryers can be dangerous and are a leading cause of Thanksgiving-related fires.

If you plan to use one:

- Operate the fryer outdoors only, on a flat, level surface, far from homes, garages, and decks.
- Make sure the turkey is completely thawed and thoroughly dried before lowering it into the oil.
- Do not overfill the fryer with oil.
- Keep a Class B fire extinguisher nearby. Never use water on a grease fire.
- Never leave a turkey fryer unattended at any time.

General Home Safety

- Turn pot handles inward to prevent spills and burns.
- Keep electric appliance cords from hanging off counters where they can be pulled down.
- Avoid wearing loose clothing or long sleeves near open flames or hot surfaces.
- After cooking, verify that all ovens, burners, and appliances are turned off.

If a Cooking Fire Occurs



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- For a small grease fire, cover the pan with a lid to smother the flames and turn off the burner.
- For an oven fire, keep the oven door closed and shut the oven off.
- If the fire spreads or you feel unsafe, evacuate immediately and call 911.

"Thanksgiving should be a time of gathering and gratitude," said Battalion Chief Gary Ronzheimer. "By staying alert in the kitchen and following simple safety steps, residents can help prevent a fire from disrupting their holiday."

For more fire safety tips or additional resources, visit the City of Muscatine website or follow the Muscatine Fire Department on social media.

About the Muscatine Fire Department

The Muscatine Fire Department provides fire and emergency medical services, rescue response, and prevention activities for the City of Muscatine, as well as providing select services for EMS to areas of Muscatine County as well as providing HAZMAT response for five counties and 100,000+ population. Call volume was over 5,500 calls in 2024. The Muscatine Fire Department began as a volunteer fire company on January 7, 1875, and was established as a full-time department in January 1916.

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Edited by:

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