



Fire Prevention Canada

Working with the private and public sectors to achieve
fire safety through education

COOKING OIL AND GREASE FIRES ARE A MAJOR CAUSE OF RESIDENTIAL FIRES IN CANADA

Kitchen fires due to cooking oil or grease igniting into flames cause the fastest-spreading and most destructive type of residential fire. When cooking with grease or oil, it is extremely important that you plan ahead so that you will know how to react fast to fire. Here are some tips:

Deep Frying

- The safest way to deep fry foods such as chicken or fries is to use a thermostatically-controlled electric skillet or a deep fat fryer.

Pan Frying

- Keep a pan lid or cookie sheet handy in case grease or oil catches fire. The lid or cookie sheet should be slid over the top of the pan to smother the fire.
- Never attempt to move a flaming pot or pan away from the stove. The movement can fan the flames and so spread the fire. The pan will also likely be very hot, causing you to drop it. In either case, you are placing yourself at great risk. Your immediate action should be to smother the fire by sliding a lid or flat cookie sheet over the pan. Afterwards, turn off the heat and exhaust the fan, allowing the pan time to cool. Most importantly, react fast, because grease fires spread very quickly.

Oven Cooking

- Keep your oven clean. Grease and food splatters can ignite at high temperatures.
- Ensure that you wear oven mitts when removing cooking containers to avoid serious burns.
- Follow the cooking instructions for the recipe and the product you are using.
- Broiling is a popular method of cooking. When you use your broiler, place the rack 5 to 8 cm (two to three inches) from the broiler element. Always place a drip pan beneath the broiler rack to catch the fat drippings. Never use aluminum foil for this purpose because the fat accumulated on the foil could catch fire or spill over.

Microwave Cooking

Microwave ovens are a marvellous time-saving tool, but there are three characteristics of microwave cooking you should be cognisant of:

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

Foods, like those in high-fat or sugar, can heat very rapidly but feel cool to the touch. Pastry fillings can be very hot, but the crust cooler. Milk in baby bottles could be boiling, but the bottle itself not very hot to the touch. Use caution at all times.

Do not use tin foil or any other metal objects in the microwave. If a fire occurs, keep the door closed and unplug the unit. Call a qualified maintenance technician to ensure the microwave is in proper working order before using it again.