



# Illinois State Fire Marshal wants you to have a safe holiday season

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SPRINGFIELD – Thanksgiving is just a few days away and the Office of Illinois State Fire Marshal (OFSM) is offering Illinoisans a few tips on how to reduce the risks of fire in their homes.

“Thanksgiving Day has the highest rate of cooking fires every year,” said Fire Marshal Matt Perez. “Cooking equipment is involved in almost half of all reported home fires each year and is the second leading cause of home fire deaths. To prevent cooking fires this holiday season, it’s important that people stay alert, be aware of potential fire hazards, and practice fire safety while cooking and decorating for the holidays.”

- Remember, someone should be in the kitchen at all times, keeping an eye on the food, when the stovetop is in use. Unattended cooking accounts for 33% of cooking fires.
- Those who plan to fry the turkey this year should be careful not to overfill the pot with oil and that the turkey is completely thawed before frying. Both will prevent hot oil from spilling over and potentially causing fire or severe burns.
- When hanging lights this holiday season, make sure to use clips instead of nails to avoid damaging the wires. Replace all string lights that are worn or broken. These steps will reduce the risk of electrical fires as one in four home Christmas tree fires is caused by electrical problems.
- Make sure all decorations are flame retardant and keep burning candles away from anything that may catch fire. More than a third of home decorations fires are caused by candles.
- Anyone using a space heater to keep warm this winter should be sure to place it at least three feet away from other objects, such as curtains and rugs.
- Make sure fireplaces are cleaned, inspected, and working properly before lighting them up.

Additional fire safety tips can be found on the NFPA [website](#) or on the Office of the State Fire Marshal [website](#).