

Red Cross Offers Steps To Help You Avoid A Cooking Fire On Thanksgiving

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ST. LOUIS - Thanksgiving and the day before are the top two days in this country for the chance of a cooking fire to happen in someone's home. The American Red Cross of Greater St. Louis offers safety steps everyone can follow if they will be preparing their family's Thanksgiving feast.

"Cooking is the leading cause of home fires, home fire injuries and the second leading cause of home fire deaths," said Beth Elders, Executive Director, Red Cross of Greater St. Louis. "Most happen because people leave cooking food unattended. We want

everyone to have a safe, enjoyable holiday, so don't leave the kitchen while you're cooking."

COOKING SAFETY TIPS Follow these safety tips and visit [redcross.org/fire](https://www.redcross.org/fire) for more information, including a fire escape plan to practice with your family.

- Stay in the kitchen when you are frying, grilling, or broiling food. If you must leave the kitchen for even a short period of time, turn off the stove.
- Use a timer to remind yourself that the stove or oven is on.
- Avoid wearing loose clothing or dangling sleeves while cooking.
- Keep kids and pets at least three feet away from cooking areas.
- Keep anything that can catch on fire — potholders, oven mitts, wooden utensils, paper or plastic bags, food packaging, and towels or curtains — away from your stove top and oven or any other appliance that generates heat.
- Clean cooking surfaces on a regular basis to prevent grease buildup.
- Consider purchasing a fire extinguisher to keep in your kitchen.
- Always check the kitchen before going to bed or leaving home to make sure all stoves, ovens and small appliances are turned off.

Smoke alarms save lives. Install a smoke alarm near your kitchen, on each level of your home, near sleeping areas, and inside and outside bedrooms if you sleep with doors closed. Use the test button to check it each month. Replace all batteries at least once a year. If you cannot afford to purchase smoke alarms or are physically unable to install one, the Red Cross may be able to help. Contact your [local Red Cross](#) for more information.

HOME FIRE CAMPAIGN SAVE LIVES Since October 2014, the Red Cross Home Fire Campaign, working with community partners, has saved at least 1,969 lives by educating families about fire safety, helping them create escape plans and installing free smoke alarms in high-risk areas across the country. To learn more about the campaign and how you can get involved, visit [redcross.org/homefires](https://www.redcross.org/homefires).

About the Red Cross

The American Red Cross shelters, feeds and provides comfort to victims of disasters; supplies about 40% of the nation's blood; teaches skills that save lives; distributes international humanitarian aid; and supports veterans, military members, and their families. The Red Cross is a nonprofit organization that depends on volunteers and the generosity of the American public to deliver its mission. For more information, please visit [redcross.org](https://www.redcross.org) or [CruzRojaAmericana.org](https://www.CruzRojaAmericana.org), or visit us on Twitter at [@RedCross](https://twitter.com/RedCross).