

Talking Turkey: Deep-fryers Demand Strict Safety Precautions to Protect Family and Property

Thanksgiving is traditionally a time for family, food - and fires.

It's the most dangerous day of the year for home cooking mishaps, with nearly [triple the number of house fires](#) than an average day.

One reason is the improper use of turkey fryers, says the [U.S. Fire Administration](#). While deep-fried turkeys are a delicacy touted by many TV chefs, home cooks need to be vigilant when using them.

"It's critical to understand and adhere to safe operating procedures, because there is the potential for fires, severe burns and property damage," said Jim Littleton, vice president, Claims, of Assurant Specialty Property. "It's particularly important to use them on a stable, flat surface away from flammable structures, and to keep curious children and pets away from the fryer to avoid injury."

According to the [U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission](#), from 2003 to 2014 there were more than 125 reported incidents involving turkey fryers that resulted in fires, burns, explosions, smoke inhalation or other injuries.

The [National Fire Protection Association](#) recommends that instead of using outdoor gas-fueled fryers that cook turkeys in hot oil, consumers should consider alternatives such as buying deep-fried turkeys from specialty stores or restaurants, or using an "oil-less" turkey fryer.

However, for cooks who do decide to deep-fry their holiday bird using oil, the [CPSC](#) and other safety groups offers these tips:

- Don't overfill the pot with oil. One way to determine the safe amount is to:
 - Put the turkey in the empty fryer.
 - Fill with water until the bird is under one-half inch of water.
 - Remove and thoroughly dry turkey.
 - Mark the water level, empty and dry the pot, then refill with oil to the level marked.
- Never leave the fryer unattended and use the fryer only on a stable, flat surface.
- Closely monitor the oil temperature, because many fryers do not have a thermostat. Cooking oil is combustible and can catch fire, so turn off the burner at the first sign of smoke coming from the oil.
- Thoroughly thaw and dry any kind of meat before placing in hot oil. Partially frozen or wet meat can cause oil to splash, resulting in burns.



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Thanksgiving is one of the most dangerous cooking days of the year, so precautions should be taken to prevent mishaps.

- Use the fryer only in open areas away from homes, garages, decks or other flammable structures.
- Lower and raise meat slowly to avoid splatter, and keep skin covered with oven mitts to protect against burns.
- Call 911 in the event of a fire. Do not try to put out an oil fire using water.

“By taking appropriate precautions, we hope everyone will enjoy a safe and happy Thanksgiving,” Littleton said.