



# THANKSGIVING DINNER SAFETY



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Thanksgiving is a time of year when we share the kitchen with family and friends – and enjoying yourself is an absolute must. But those not taking routine precautions during this busy holiday period are likely the ones who succumb to holiday-related injuries – so make sure you don't become one of these statistics. According to the U.S. Fire Administration (USFA), 2,000 fires occur on Thanksgiving every year.<sup>1</sup> This results in an average of five deaths, 25 injuries, and \$21 million in property loss each year.<sup>1</sup> What is the primary cause for these gruesome fires on Thanksgiving Day? Cooking Thanksgiving dinner - whether baking a pie or deep-frying the turkey. If used improperly, an overloaded fryer can easily tip over and set an entire house ablaze. Another major cause for concern while cooking is bacteria. If frozen turkeys are thawed improperly or if fresh turkeys come pre-stuffed, bacteria can spread very quickly.<sup>2</sup> (For more information on food-related safety check out the [Food and Picnic Safety fact sheet.](#))

## Prevention Tips

Don't fret! If you keep these tips in mind, not even the kids running around the kitchen will distract you from having a safe and enjoyable Thanksgiving:

- ▶ When frying a turkey, never place the fryer in a garage or on a wooden deck.<sup>1</sup>
- ▶ Make sure that fryers are used on a flat surface and are never left unattended.<sup>1</sup>
- ▶ Try and keep the kids away from the cooking area by designating a "kid-free zone".<sup>1</sup>
- ▶ Keep children and pets away from the fryer, even if it is not in use. The oil can remain dangerously hot for hours after turning off.<sup>1</sup>
- ▶ Make sure to follow precise instructions for thawing frozen turkeys.<sup>2</sup>
- ▶ Always wash hands, utensils, and work surfaces after handling raw meat.<sup>3</sup>
- ▶ When using marinades be careful – oil and water do not mix!<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Thanksgiving Safety Tips from the U.S. Fire Administration (USFA). Department of Homeland Security. <http://www.dhs.gov/blog/2010/11/24/thanksgiving-safety-tips-us-fire-administration-usfa>. Published November 2010. Accessed July 2015.

<sup>2</sup> Let's Talk Turkey. United States Department of Agriculture. [http://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/topics/food-safety-education/get-answers/food-safety-fact-sheets/poultry-preparation/lets-talk-turkey/CT\\_Index](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/topics/food-safety-education/get-answers/food-safety-fact-sheets/poultry-preparation/lets-talk-turkey/CT_Index). Published August 2013. Accessed July 2015.

<sup>3</sup> It's Turkey Time: Safely Prepare Your Holiday Meal. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <http://www.cdc.gov/Features/TurkeyTime/>. Published November 2014. Accessed July 2015.

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