

Cooking Safety

Cooking brings family and friends together, provides an outlet for creativity and can be relaxing. But did you know that cooking fires are the number one cause of home fires and home injuries? By following a few safety tips you can prevent these fires.

"COOK WITH CAUTION"

- » Be on alert! If you are sleepy or have consumed alcohol don't use the stove or stovetop.
- » Stay in the kitchen while you are frying, grilling, or broiling food. If you leave the kitchen for even a short period of time, turn off the stove.
- » If you are simmering, baking, roasting, or boiling food, check it regularly, remain in the home while food is cooking, and use a timer to remind you that you are cooking.
- » Keep anything that can catch fire — oven mitts, wooden utensils, food packaging, towels or curtains — away from your stovetop.

IF YOU HAVE A COOKING FIRE...

- » Just get out! When you leave, close the door behind you to help contain the fire.
- » Call **9-1-1** or the local emergency number after you leave.
- » If you try to fight the fire, be sure others are getting out and you have a clear way out.
- » Keep a lid nearby when you're cooking to smother small grease fires. Smother the fire by sliding the lid over the pan and turn off the stovetop. Leave the pan covered until it is completely cooled.
- » For an oven fire turn off the heat and keep the door closed.



Cooking and Kids

Have a "kid-free zone" of at least 3 feet around the stove and areas where hot food or drink is prepared or carried.

FACTS

- ! The leading cause of fires in the kitchen is unattended cooking.
- ! Most cooking fires in the home involve the stovetop.



Your Source for SAFETY Information

NFPA Public Education Division • 1 Batterymarch Park, Quincy, MA 02169

www.nfpa.org/education

College Campus Fire Safety

College students living away from home should take a few minutes to make sure they are living in a fire-safe environment. Educating students on what they can do to stay safe during the school year is important and often overlooked.

SAFETY TIPS

- » Look for fully sprinklered housing when choosing a dorm or off-campus housing.
- » Make sure you can hear the building alarm system when you are in your dorm room.
- » If you live in a dormitory, make sure your sleeping room has a smoke alarm, or your dormitory suite has a smoke alarm in each living area as well as the sleeping room. For the best protection, all smoke alarms in the dormitory suite should be interconnected so that when one sounds, they all sound.
- » If you live in an apartment or house, make sure smoke alarms are installed in each sleeping room, outside every sleeping area, and on each level of the apartment unit or house. For the best protection, all smoke alarms in the apartment unit or house should be interconnected so that when one sounds, they all sound.
- » Test all smoke alarms at least monthly.
- » Never remove batteries or disable the alarm.
- » Learn your building's evacuation plan and practice all drills as if they were the real thing.
- » If you live off campus, have a fire escape plan with two ways out of every room.
- » When the smoke alarm or fire alarm sounds, get out of the building quickly and stay out.
- » Stay in the kitchen when cooking.
- » Cook only when you are alert, not sleepy or drowsy from medicine or alcohol.
- » Check with your local fire department for any restrictions before using a barbecue grill, fire pit, or chimenea.
- » Check your school's rules before using electrical appliances in your room.

Smoking Sense

If you smoke, smoke outside and only where it is permitted. Use sturdy, deep, non-tip ashtrays. Don't smoke in bed or when you've been drinking or are drowsy.

Candle Care

Burn candles only if the school permits their use. A candle is an open flame and should be placed away from anything that can burn. Never leave a candle unattended. Blow it out when you leave the room or go to sleep.



FACTS

- ❗ Fires are more common during the evening hours, between 5–11 pm, and on weekends.
- ❗ Cooking equipment is the cause of about three-quarters of fires, and most fires begin in a kitchen or cooking area.



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Safety in Places of Public Assembly

Every day, millions of people wake up, go to work or school, and take part in social events. But every so often the unexpected happens: an earthquake, a fire, a chemical spill, an act of terrorism or some other disaster. Routines change drastically, and people are suddenly aware of how fragile their lives and routines can be. Each disaster can have lasting effects — people may be seriously injured or killed, and devastating and costly property damage can occur. People entering any public assembly building need to be prepared in case of an emergency.

BEFORE YOU ENTER

- »» **Take a good look.** Does the building appear to be in a condition that makes you feel comfortable? Is the main entrance wide and does it open outward to allow easy exit? Is the outside area clear of materials stored against the building or blocking exits?
- »» **Have a communication plan.** Identify a relative or friend to contact in case of emergency and you are separated from family or friends.
- »» **Plan a meeting place.** Pick a meeting place outside to meet family or friends with whom you are attending the function. If there is an emergency, be sure to meet them there.

WHEN YOU ENTER

- »» **Take a good look.** Locate exits immediately. When you enter a building you should look for all available exits. Some exits may be in front and some in back of you. Be prepared to use your closest exit. You may not be able to use the main exit.
- »» **Check for clear exit paths.** Make sure aisles are wide enough and not obstructed by chairs or furniture. Check to make sure your exit door is not blocked or chained. If there are not at least two exits or exit paths are blocked, report the violation to management and leave the building if it is not immediately addressed. Call the local fire marshal to register a complaint.
- »» **Do you feel safe?** Does the building appear to be overcrowded? Are there fire sources such as candles burning, cigarettes or cigars burning, pyrotechnics, or other heat sources that may make you feel unsafe? Are there safety systems in place such as alternative exits, sprinklers, and smoke alarms? Ask the management for clarification on your concerns. If you do not feel safe in the building, leave immediately.

DURING AN EMERGENCY

React immediately. If an alarm sounds, you see smoke or fire, or some other unusual disturbance immediately exit the building in an orderly fashion.

Get out, stay out! Once you have escaped, stay out. Under no circumstances should you ever go back into a burning building. Let trained firefighters conduct rescue operations.

FACT

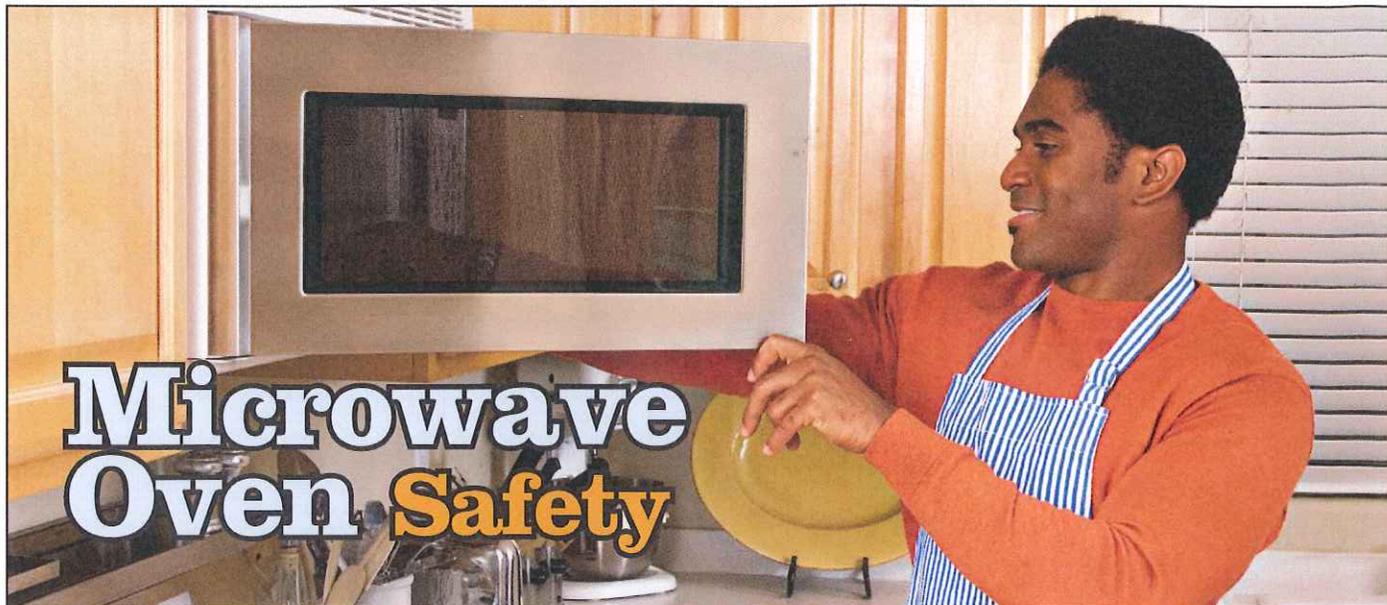
A fire at The Station nightclub in W. Warwick, RI, on February 20, 2003, claimed 100 lives and is the fourth-deadliest nightclub fire in U.S. history. Since that fire, NFPA has enacted tough new code provisions for fire sprinklers and crowd management in nightclub-type venues. Those provisions mark sweeping changes to the codes and standards governing safety in assembly occupancies.



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Microwave Oven Safety

With busy lives, families rely on the microwave oven as a quick way to heat up a meal, warm up a drink or defrost dinner. While the convenience of the microwave oven is something we take for granted, safety should not be. By following a few simple safety tips you can prevent painful burns and possible fires.

SAFETY TIPS

- » PURCHASE a microwave oven that has the label of an independent testing laboratory. Make sure to complete and return the product registration card. This way the manufacturer can reach you if there is a recall on the product.
- » PLUG the microwave oven directly into the wall outlet — never use an extension cord.
- » MAKE sure the microwave oven is at a safe height, within easy reach of all users.
- » OPEN food slowly, away from the face. Hot steam or the food itself can cause burns.
- » FOOD heats unevenly in microwave ovens. Stir and test before eating or giving to children.
- » NEVER heat a baby bottle in the microwave. Since a microwave oven heats unevenly, it can create hot pockets, leading to burns. Warm a bottle in a bowl of warm — not hot or boiling — water, or by running it under the tap.



MICROWAVE USE

Always **supervise** children when they are using a microwave oven.

Use only **microwave-safe** food containers or dishes. Never use aluminum foil or metal in a microwave oven.

If you have a **fire** in the microwave, leave the door closed, turn the oven off and unplug it from the wall. If the fire does not go out, get outside and call the fire department.

FACT

Scald burns are the leading cause of injury from microwave ovens.



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