

A THANKSGIVING SAFETY MESSAGE FROM FIRE COMMISSIONER AYERS



With the onset of the holiday season, it is important to focus on fire safety and prevention. The delicious deep-fried turkey has quickly grown in popularity and the Philadelphia Fire Department is concerned that backyard chefs may be sacrificing fire safety for good taste. These tips will help everyone have a safe and happy thanksgiving.

Turkey fryer hazards

- Many units easily tip over, spilling the hot oil from the cooking pot.
- If the cooking pot is overfilled with oil, the oil may spill out of the unit when the turkey is placed into the cooking pot. Oil may hit the burner or flames, causing a fire to engulf the entire unit.
- Partially frozen turkeys placed into the fryer can cause a spillover effect. This too may result in an extensive fire.
- With no thermostat controls, the units also have the potential to overheat the oil to the point of combustion.
- The lid and handles on the sides of the cooking pot get dangerously hot, posing severe burn hazards.

Important safety information

If you absolutely must use a turkey fryer, please use the following tips.

- Turkey fryers should always be used outdoors a safe distance from buildings and any other flammable materials.
- Never use turkey fryers in a garage or on a wooden deck.
- Make sure the fryers are used on a flat surface to reduce accidental tipping.
- Never leave the fryer unattended. Most units do not have thermostat controls. If you do not watch the fryer carefully, the oil will continue to heat until it catches fire.
- Never let children or pets near the fryer even if it is not in use. The oil inside the cooking pot can remain dangerously hot hours after use.
- To avoid oil spillover, do not overfill the fryer.

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- Use well-insulated potholders or oven mitts when touching pot or lid handles. If possible, wear safety goggles to protect your eyes from oil splatter.
- Make sure the turkey is completely thawed and be careful with marinades. Oil and water do not mix, and water causes oil to spill over causing a fire or even an explosion hazard.
- The National Turkey Federation (NTF) recommends thawing the turkey in the refrigerator approximately 24 hours for every five pounds in weight.
- Keep an all-purpose fire extinguisher nearby. Never use water to extinguish a grease fire. If the fire is manageable, use your all-purpose fire extinguisher. If the fire increases, immediately call the fire department for help.

Once again enjoy your holidays and if you have any questions feel free to contact the Fire Prevention Division at 215-686-1382 or visit our website at www.freedomfromfire.com