



Northeast Public Power Association Safety Corner

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The Dangers of Deep Frying a Turkey

Deep frying has become a trend in recent years for turkey lovers on Thanksgiving. Deep frying a turkey results in a crispy finish on the outside with tender, juicy meat on the inside. It also frees up the oven for other Thanksgiving food staples. **Before you decide to deep fry, however, recognize the serious risks that can come with this cooking technique.** Deep frying a turkey is so dangerous, in fact, the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) recommends avoiding this cooking method completely.

The Risk

According to the NFPA, **Thanksgiving is the number one holiday for home cooking fires.** The U.S. Fire Administration seconds this assertion, finding an estimated 2,400 residential building fires, 25 serious injuries and 5 deaths occur each year on Thanksgiving Day. The average number of house fires on Thanksgiving is more than double (2.3 times) the number of fires on other days.

Risks Include:

- **Third-degree burns** as well as damage to the eyes from splashed oil, spilling an overfilled cooking pot or a pot tipping over.
- Turkey fryer mishaps could also lead to dangerous and potentially deadly **home cooking fires** from thermostat defects and combustion, a dangerously hot fryer or kids or pets touching the fryer.

Preventing Injury or Fire

The NFPA believes the level of risk associated with turkey deep fryers is such that **even a prudent and well-informed consumer cannot safely use one.** Cooking turkeys in hot oil poses significant risks, including the fryer tipping over or the oil coming in contact with burners – two things that could ignite uncontrollable fires. Turkey frying appliances could also experience defects with temperature control, potentially overheating the oil and causing combustion. Deep frying a turkey can come with many potentially life-threatening risks, even for careful users.

Tips for Preventing Fires/Burns:

- Never place a frozen turkey into the hot oil.
- Ensure you have the proper equipment to handle the hot turkey.
- When frying a turkey, place it on a non-combustible surface



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