

National Home Fire Safety Week: Nov. 24?30

November 24 to 30 is National Home Fire Safety Week, and the Canada Safety Council encourages home cooks to put safety on the front-burner and prevent cooking fires. According to reports from Canadian fire commissioners, careless cooking remains the most common cause of home fires, and kitchens remain the most common place for home fires to start.

Don't get burned by a cooking fire. Follow the safety tips below to put safety on your front-burner:

? Stand by your pan. Don't wander away when you have something on the stove.

? Don't give clutter a home on the range. If it's not a pot or pan, it doesn't belong on the stovetop. Keep paper towels, rags or other combustibles away from the burners, and don't use your oven for storage.

? Order in if you're stewed or half-baked. Cooking while tipsy is asking for trouble.

If a fire ignites, know what to do.

1. If the fire has already spread from the pan, then get out, stay out, and call for help.

2. If you the fire is confined to the pan:

? Put a lid on it. A tightfitting lid clasped on top of the pan should immediately cut off the source of oxygen from the flames.

? Shut it off and leave the lid on until the pan has cooled completely.

? Don't add water. Water will spread a grease fire and make things worse.

? If at first you don't succeed, quit. If you are unable to contain a blaze within 30 seconds, get out as per Step 1.

3. If your clothing catches fire: stop, drop and roll.

In 2011, 187 people in Canada died from exposure to smoke, fire or flames.

In 2012?2013, there were at least 995 hospitalizations in Canada due to injuries from fire and flames.

In Alberta in 2012, there were 2,037 residential fires, and where the cause could be determined (excluding arson), 23 per cent were due to cooking.

In B.C. in 2012, there were 2,192 residential fires, and 34 per cent of those started in the kitchen.

In Ontario in 2012, there were 5,441 residential fires, and of those not caused by arson, 21 per cent were caused by cooking.

In Quebec in 2012, there were 4,466 residential fires, of which 27 per cent started in the kitchen. Allstate Insurance reported in 2012 that kitchen fires accounted for 33 per cent of all fire claims in Quebec, and has been the leading cause of fire-related claims in that province since 2007.