



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 21, 2013

CONTACT: Katelyn Abernathy or Claire Marsalis

615-253-8941 (OFFICE)

Thanksgiving cooks, be aware of turkey fryers' risks

NASHVILLE, TN – Outdoor, gas-fueled fryers cook up juicy turkeys in a fraction of the time it takes to roast one in an indoor oven. However, the State Fire Marshal's Office is joining the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) in discouraging the residential use of outdoor gas-fueled turkey fryers that immerse the turkey in hot oil because they pose an enormous risk for injury.

"Outdoor fryers heat gallons of cooking oil to very high temperatures to cook the turkey. The risk of this oil being spilled is significant, and the resulting injuries can be severe," State Fire Marshal and Commerce & Insurance Commissioner Julie Mix McPeak says.

Turkey fryer hazards:

- The fryers are often bumped or tipped over when the turkey is put in or taken out, presenting a greater risk for the oil to splash or spill. Outdoor fryers that come with a stand pose the greatest risk of tipping.
- The oil is heated to such a high temperature for frying that the vapors could ignite, resulting in a fire.
- If you use a turkey fryer during rain or snow, the risk of injury is increased. When rain or snow hits the hot oil, the oil can splash or turn to steam, which can cause burns.
- Numerous fires have ignited when fryers have been brought indoors or into a garage to keep the appliances out of the rain.
- Moving the turkey from the fryer to a serving plate presents another chance of contact with hot oil.
- Turkeys that are not completely thawed may cause the oil to splash, which can cause burns.
- Children have been severely burned when running into turkey fryers while playing nearby.

It is recommended that consumers utilize the oil-free models that are available or seek commercial professionals to prepare this entrée. Fried turkeys can be ordered from some supermarkets and restaurants during the holiday season.

If frying your own turkey is an absolute must, the following safety measures should be carefully followed:

- Turkey fryers must always be used outdoors and a safe distance from buildings and other flammable materials.
- Never use turkey fryers indoors or on a wooden deck.
- Make sure the fryer is used on a flat surface to prevent 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 prevent spillover, do not overfill the fryer.
- 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.

- The National Turkey Foundation recommends thawing the turkey in the refrigerator approximately 24 hours for every five pounds of weight.
- Keep an all-purpose fire extinguisher nearby. Never use water to extinguish a grease or oil fire. If the fire is manageable, use your all-purpose fire extinguisher. If the fire increases, immediately call the fire department by dialing 911.

Caution should always be used when using any kind of deep fryer. Since 2008, 76 fires have been reported in Tennessee as a result of deep frying. These fires injured three civilians and three firefighters and damaged \$1,993,887 of property.

The [State Fire Marshal's Office](#) is a division of the [Department of Commerce and Insurance](#), which works to protect consumers while ensuring fair competition for industries and professionals who do business in Tennessee. Follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [YouTube](#).