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For Immediate Release  
August 2, 2016

## Kitchen Safety

### How to remain alert in one of the most occupied rooms in the house

Sycamore, IL. August 2, 2016- The kitchen is the most frequently visited room in a residence. The kitchen also has the highest danger potential than any other room. Cooking is responsible for the most home fires and personal injuries in the United States. Whether you have visitors for specific holidays, parties or casual events, the kitchen is often the most congregated area. Being mindful of the hazards that may be present may be the difference between an enjoyable gathering and a tragedy.

Kitchens are full of appliances and utilities that could become dangerous in an instant. Sharp knives are often left on the counter where a curious child may attempt to climb upon to grab, only to open a new toy that was brought home. The pot of water that was left for a few minutes to start boiling has become a handle for a child to grab, just to see the progress of the water. Ovens become forgotten about when the doorbell rings and the neighbor wants to talk about an upcoming event. All of these are examples of events that could easily happen in any home, leading to a detrimental outcome. A few tips from the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) to help be mindful of the dangers that lurk inside every household:

#### What you should know

- 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, boiling or broiling food.
- If you are simmering, baking or roasting food, check it regularly, remain in the kitchen 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.

#### Safety considerations for cooking with oil

Oil is a key ingredient found in the majority of today's kitchens. Whether a recipe calls for frying or sautéing, we include oil in almost all of our daily cooking. When using any of the many oils to prepare your meals like olive, canola, corn or soybean, consider the following safety tips when cooking:

- Always stay in the kitchen when frying on the stovetop.
- Keep an eye on what you fry. If you see wisps of smoke or the oil smells, immediately turn off the burner and/or carefully remove the pan from the burner. Smoke is a danger sign that the oil is too hot.
- Heat the oil slowly to the temperature you need for frying or sautéing.
- Add food gently to the pot or pan so the oil does not splatter.
- Always cook with a lid beside your pan. If you have a fire, slide the lid over the pan and turn off the burner. Do not remove the cover because the fire could start again. Let the pan cool for a long time. Never throw water or use a fire extinguisher on the fire.
- If the fire does not go out or you don't feel comfortable sliding a lid over the pan, get everyone out of your home. Call the fire department from outside.

For more information on kitchen safety, please contact the Sycamore Fire Department at (815) 895-4514, email us at [fire.prevention@cityofsycamore.com](mailto:fire.prevention@cityofsycamore.com) or visit us on Facebook at City of Sycamore Fire Department for occasional postings.