

Tips to Avoid a Turkey Frying Homeowners Catastrophe



While a tasty alternative to the traditional roast-in-the-oven main course, deep frying a turkey, if not careful, can lead to fire and serious injury.

The Pennsylvania Insurance Department and the Office of the State Fire Commissioner are cautioning consumers to be extra careful if deep frying a turkey is part of your Thanksgiving celebration.

According to the U.S. Fire Administration (USFA), nearly 4,300 fires occur on Thanksgiving, causing 15 deaths and almost \$27 million in property damage, many of them due to deep frying accidents.

Most turkey fryer fires are preventable. Recognizing common mistakes is a critical step in reducing your risk of a fire or potentially fatal burns.

Here are some tips to keep you, your guests and your property safe:

- Read owner's manual for proper set up and safety tips.
- Completely thaw the bird before frying (hot oil and water do not mix).
- Use the correct amount of oil. If overfilled, the oil may spill out of the pot and hit the burner of flames and fire will engulf the entire unit.
- Never leave the fryer unattended. Many don't have thermostat controls to prevent overheating of the oil to the point it ignites.
- Keep children and pets away from fryer.
- Keep an all-purpose fire extinguisher nearby. Never use water to extinguish an oil fire
- Lid and handles of the cooking pot get dangerously hot, posing severe burn hazards.
- Do not deep fry your turkey inside your garage, on your porch or inside your home.
- Use your fryer outside, away from trees, walls, fences and other structures.

Homeowner policies will cover things like the structure of your home, your personal belongings and liability protection against bodily injury to your guests, but it is best to do what you can to avoid these types of insurance claims in the first place.

For more information on homeowners insurance, visit www.insurance.pa.gov. For more fire safety tips, visit www.osfc.state.pa.us.