

# Kitchen Fires

## *A Preventable Nightmare*

According to the United States Fire Administration, cooking fires account for around 20% of all fires in residential settings. In North San Mateo County, the problem is much worse. Nearly half of all fires in our communities start in the kitchen. Locally 55% of fires in Apartment buildings start in the kitchen.

Fires of this nature can be devastating. Imagine losing your home, and all your belongings because of an unattended pot on the stove. Or the lifelong pain a child might experience after pulling a pot of boiling liquid down on themselves.

These scenarios are among the most preventable of all fire and injury causes. They can be avoided by following a few simple rules. Read on...



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Serving the Cities of:  
Brisbane, Daly City, and Pacifica  
10 Wembley Drive  
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Fire Authority**

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# Prepare Prevent React

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# Don't lose your cool!

You can stop a tragedy before it occurs by remembering to prepare, prevent, and react!

## Prepare

Remember that your stove, oven, and microwaves are each tools. With this in mind, prepare yourself so that if a problem should occur, you are ready to face it.

1. Get a fire extinguisher, and learn how to use it. Having a fire extinguisher can make the difference between replacing a pan, and replacing your home.
2. Talk to your children about safety in the kitchen. Point out that the kitchen is a dangerous place, and is not someplace to play. Also tell them that they should not cook unless an adult is in the kitchen with them. Speak with them about the rest of the safety tips in this brochure as well.

## Prevent

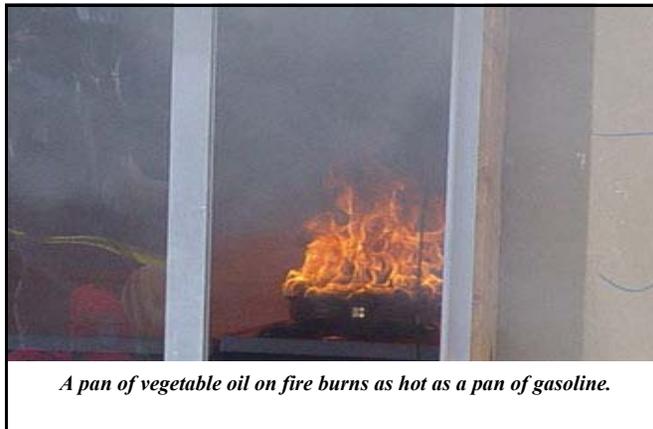
There are many things you can do to prevent a fire from happening in the first place. Here are a few tips that will help.

1. Clean grease and food from your stove after each use. Remember that this includes the fan above your stove as well. Grease buildup is a common cause of fires in the kitchen.
2. Turn pot handles in toward the center of the stove when cooking. All too often, children suffer burns as the result of their pulling a pot handle, and dumping the scalding contents on themselves. Put those handles out of reach!

3. Never wear clothes with long, and/or loose fitting sleeves while cooking. Loose sleeves too close to a burner may accidentally catch fire, burning you.

4. Never cook while holding a child in your arms. Cooking requires your **full** attention. If you need to have your children in the kitchen while you cook, seat them away from the cooking area.

5. Do not ever leave your kitchen while cooking. Turning your back on your cooking **even for a minute**, can, and often does have tragic results. If you do need to leave your kitchen to help a child, or answer the door or phone, turn the stove **off**.



*A pan of vegetable oil on fire burns as hot as a pan of gasoline.*

## React

If a fire does start in your kitchen, how you react can make the difference between replacing a pan, and replacing your home. Here are a few tips on how to react to a fire in your kitchen.

### Stove Top Fires

1. Turn off the burner.
2. Cover the pot or pan with its lid. Slide the lid across the pan from the left or right.
3. **NEVER USE WATER ON A GREASE FIRE.** It will only spread the fire, making mat-

ters worse. A better choice would be to use a fire extinguisher.

4. If the fire has spread to the cabinets, or counter top, exit the house and call 911. *Do not go back into the house for any reason.*

### Oven Fires

1. **DO NOT OPEN THE OVEN!** Keep the door closed so the fire doesn't spread.



*This kitchen burned for a little over 6 minutes before being extinguished. The fire started because of an unattended frying pan full of oil.*

2. Turn off the heat to the oven.
3. Call 911, and exit the house.

### Microwave Oven Fires

1. Don't cook anything in a container made with metal. It's a good idea to only use containers labeled as "Microwave Safe."
2. Leave the microwave closed.
3. Call 911.

These tips will all help you stay safe from a kitchen fire. If you would like more information, feel free to call us at (650)991-8138, and we'd be glad to help you!