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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
THANKSGIVING -- TIME FOR FAMILIES TO PRACTICE KITCHEN SAFETY
Unattended Cooking is leading Cause of Kitchen Fires

Papillion, Nebraska - Thanksgiving is a time to give thanks, express gratitude, and enjoy a holiday meal with family and friends. It's also when there is almost three times the daily average number of cooking fires. In fact, cooking fires are the number one cause of home fires and injuries in the United States.

Turkey, stuffing, pumpkin pie and all of the trimmings call for a lot of preparation and cooking. But, when family, friends, and especially children gather in the kitchen, it's very easy to get distracted and forget about what's on the stove. Unattended cooking is the leading cause of kitchen fires. Each year, there are nearly 103,000 emergency room visits due to a fire/burn related injury for children under the age of 14. Most of these injuries are caused by contact with hot surfaces or flames.

Safe Kids Sarpy/Cass offers these safety tips to help you prevent a fire and keep the Thanksgiving holiday a memorable tradition.

Prevent Cooking Fires

- Never leave hot food or appliances unattended while cooking. If you are frying, grilling or broiling food stay in the kitchen. If you are baking, boiling, or simmering food, check food frequently.
- Always be alert when you are cooking. If you are under the influence of medication or alcohol, avoid using the stove or stovetop.
- Keep anything that can catch on fire at least 3 feet from the stove, toaster oven, or other heat source.
- Keep the stovetop, burners, and oven clean.
- Do not wear loose fitting clothes when you are cooking as they may catch fire from the stovetop.



Department of Health & Wellness

Prevent burns and scalds

- To prevent hot food or liquid spills, use the stove's back burner and/or turn pot handles away from the stove's edge.
- Keep appliance cords coiled, away from the counter edges and out of children's reach, especially if the appliances contain hot foods or liquids.
- Use oven mitts or potholders when carrying hot food.
- Open hot containers from the microwave slowly and away from your face.
- Never use a wet oven mitt, as it presents a scald danger if the moisture in the mitt is heated.

Keep Your Kids Safe

- Create a 3 foot Kid Free Zone around the stove. Young children should be more than 3 feet from any place where there is hot food, drinks, pans or trays.
- Never hold a child while cooking, carrying or drinking hot foods or liquids.
- Hot foods and items should be kept from the edge of counters and tables.
- Do not use a tablecloth or placemat if very young children are in the home.
- When children are old enough, teach them to cook safely and always with help from an adult.

Safe Kids Sarpy/Cass works to prevent unintentional childhood injury, the leading cause of death and disability to children. Safe Kids Sarpy/Cass was founded in 2006 and is led by the Sarpy/Cass Dept of Health and Wellness and is a member of Safe Kids Worldwide, a global network of organizations dedicated to preventing unintentional childhood injury.

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