**Fire Fighters Stress Safety on Thanksgiving Day**

*Safe travel and home cooking lead to a Happy Thanksgiving for all*

A cooking fire is three times more likely on Thanksgiving than on any other day of the year. Most of those Thanksgiving Day fires occur between noon and 4:00 p.m. – the peak cooking hours. Thanksgiving is also one of the busiest travel times of the year with more than 50 million people traveling away from home.

With that in mind, your fire fighters are reaching out to make sure everyone enjoys their turkey dinner without our intervention.

Just a few extra moments of precaution can result in a safer holiday. When it comes to preparing your Thanksgiving dinner, fire fighters remind you that many of those fires can be easily avoided by staying alert and in the kitchen while cooking.

Many home cooking fires are caused by unattended equipment, abandoned material, a heat source left too close to flammable materials, product misuse and cooking equipment that is not properly turned off.

Turkey fryers – which use a large amount of cooking oil at high temperatures – also pose a significant danger and can lead to devastating burns, other injuries and the destruction of property.

If you have a cooking fire, go outside and call 9-1-1 for the help of your local fire fighters. Do not try to fight the fire yourself.

Thanksgiving is also when cooking-related burns increase. To prevent scalds and burns, cook on back burners and make sure all pot handles are turned inward so children don’t come into contact with them. Appliances that get hot, such as toaster ovens, should also be well out of a child’s reach. Have a kid-free zone of at least three feet around the stove and areas where hot food or drinks are prepared or carried.

When traveling, fire fighters encourage you to focus on driving. We understand that there are many distractions when taking a family trip, but paying extra attention to the road is important to ensure you travel safely.

This includes filling your windshield washer fluid and checking your tire pressure. Fire fighters check their fire truck before each shift, and we encourage you to do the same with your vehicle before your trip.

Most importantly, anytime you travel, always wear your seat belt and remain sober and drug-free.

If you are involved in an accident, stay calm and first make sure that no one in the car is injured. Following that, stay in your car and call 9-1-1. Leaving your car can add extra danger, especially on the interstate.

Your fire fighters urge you to cook and drive with caution, but rest assured, if you need us, we are a phone call away.

Happy Thanksgiving.

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