

# NEWS RELEASE

---

**The Ohio  
Department of Commerce**

**Ted Strickland, Governor  
Kimberly A. Zurz, Director**

**For Immediate Release**  
November 25, 2008

Contact: Shane Cartmill at (614) 752-7179  
or Cara Keithley at (614) 644-7115

**OHIO DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**  
**State Fire Marshal Urges Ohioans To Cook Safely During This Holiday Season**

State Fire Marshal Michael P. Bell is reminding Ohioans about the dangers of cooking fires this holiday season.

"Cooking fires can result in devastating loss and injuries to friends and loved ones," said Marshal Bell. "I urge all Ohioans to use common sense when cooking this holiday season so that you may have a joyful holiday gathering."

Cooking is the leading cause of home fires on Thanksgiving Day nationally and accounted for 53% of Ohio's residential fires on Thanksgiving in 2007.

Marshal Bell offers the following safety tips for safe holiday cooking:

- Stay in the kitchen when you are frying, grilling, broiling or boiling food.
- If you must leave the room, even for a short period of time, turn off the stove.
- Have a safety zone and keep children and pets three feet away from the stove and oven. Never hold a small child while cooking.
- Avoid wearing loose clothing or dangling sleeves while cooking.
- Keep potholders, oven mitts, towels and anything else that can burn away from your stovetop.
- Clean up food and grease from burners and the stove top.
- If you must use a turkey fryer, keep the fryer outside in view when it is on and keep it away from buildings and other structures, such as garages, carports and decks. Always follow the manufacturer's instructions.
- Keep an ABC multi-purpose dry chemical fire extinguisher nearby. Never use water to extinguish a grease fire. Water and grease are a dangerous combination and could cause hot grease to splatter.

In addition to using caution in the kitchen, Marshal Bell encourages Ohioans to have a working smoke detector installed on every level of the home and inside each bedroom or sleeping area. Each member of the household should know the home fire escape plan and practice it twice a year. Also, holiday guests should be made aware of the escape plan and the location of any fire extinguishers in case there is an emergency.

# # #