

# Turkey Fryer Safety

As preparations for Thanksgiving get underway in the Charlotte area, the Charlotte Fire Department want to warn citizens of the dangers associated with the use of turkey fryers! The use of these unique cooking devices to prepare holiday meals becomes dangerous because of the risk of burn injuries and fires.

Past experiences with the use of these frying devices have shown that many of the fryers have a risk of tipping over, overheating, or spilling hot oil, leading to fires and burns. This deep-frying cooking process requires that up to five gallons of oil be heated to high temperatures before lowering the turkey into the device.

Many of the concerns involving these turkey fryer devices include:

- \* When the turkey is placed in the hot oil, oil may spill onto the burner, creating a fire.
- \* The units can tip over, spilling hot, scalding oil onto anyone or anything nearby.
- \* Some units do not have automatic thermostat controls to regulate the temperature of the oil, so oil may heat to 350+ degrees and to the point of boiling over and can catch fire.
- \* The sides, lids, and handles can get extremely hot and may cause burns.
- \* Every holiday season, burn centers in the United States admit and treat people burned while deep frying turkeys. In some cases, the burn victims are children who run into the fryers while playing nearby.
- \* Splattering oil can occur when a frozen turkey is added to five gallons of boiling oil."
- \* Gallons of oil heated in excess of 350 degrees Fahrenheit can quickly ignite if something goes wrong, and house, decks and garages can ignite.

Safety tips to prevent turkey fryer incidents:

Follow manufacturer instructions for operation and safety concerns.

- \* Supervise operation of cooking device and do not leave it unattended
- \* Keep children and pets away from cooking area
- \* Cook outside on a level area away from combustible decks , grass, vegetation or pine needles
- \* Use non-combustible cooking mitts or gloves when handling cooking hardware or placing or removing turkeys into the grease filled pot
- \* Don't overfill pot with cooking oil
- \* Keep pot lid on during cooking to prevent spatter from hot oil

Although frying substantially cuts down on cooking time, and some believe fried turkey tastes better, there are alternatives for consumers using these fryers. If you prefer fried turkey, the Charlotte Fire Department urges you to seek out commercial professionals to prepare your entree. Fried turkeys can be ordered from some supermarkets and restaurants during the holiday season.