

media release

SA Metropolitan Fire Service



Cooking: the most common winter house fire risk

HOME FIRE SAFETY WEEK – Friday, 5 June 2020

Two out of five cooking fires started because occupants left the stove unattended, the SA Metropolitan Fire Service (MFS) warns as part of Home Fire Safety Week.

Unsafe cooking practices are one of the most common causes of house fires in South Australia.

Each year, the SA Metropolitan Fire Service (MFS) and SA Country Fire Service (CFS) respond to more than 200 blazes related to cooking.

Year	Cooking fires (indoors and outdoors)
2018	297
2019	261
2020 (to 31 May)	119

MFS Community Engagement Officer Phil Evans said cooking is a task that requires full attention and any distraction may lead to a fire that potentially threaten lives and destroy property.

“In South Australia, about 40% of these fires started when cooking was left unattended,” MFS Community Engagement Officer Evans said.

“Never leave cooking unattended, even for a short amount of time. If you have to leave the kitchen, turn off the stove.”

MFS Community Engagement Officer Evans warns the community to never use water to put out a fat or oil fire.

“Water can cause burning oil or grease to splatter and create a much larger fire, putting you and your family in more danger,” MFS Community Engagement Officer Evans said.

“Having a fire blanket and a dry chemical powder fire extinguisher near your kitchen away from the stove is your best defence to a grease fire.

“But that’s not enough – familiarise yourself with the instructions so when the time comes, you know how to use them safely.”

Regularly cleaning grease from cooking surfaces, including range hoods, and avoiding putting items on stovetops are easy ways to prevent a fire from starting while cooking.

More MFS cooking safety tips:

- Use a fire blanket or a Dry Chemical Powder fire extinguisher with a minimum rating of 5B:E to smother the flames.
Note: If you do not have a fire blanket or an extinguisher protect your hands and use a saucepan lid or a solid bread board to smother the fire. Keep the utensil lid on the benchtop for this purpose.
- Never try to move a pan that has caught on fire. This may result in spillage, injury and the spreading of fire.
- Wear clothes with short or tight-fitting sleeves. Loose garments can easily catch fire. If a fire occurs in the oven, turn the oven off and leave the door closed to smother the fire.
- Always call the fire service even if you have put the fire out. The fire could have spread to your range hood or into your ceiling through your exhaust fan. There is no cost for fire service attendance when you call 000.

For media enquiries and interviews call the MFS Media Line on (08) 8204 3770

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