

# CAL FIRE NEWS RELEASE

## California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection



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### **CAL FIRE URGES CAUTION THIS FIRE PREVENTION WEEK, REMINDING CALIFORNIANS THAT COOKING SAFETY STARTS WITH YOU**

Sacramento – CAL FIRE is teaming up with the National Fire Protection Association® (NFPA®) to promote this year’s Fire Prevention Week™ (FPW) campaign, “Cooking safety starts with YOU. Pay attention to fire prevention™.” The campaign provides an opportunity to educate everyone about the simple but important actions individuals can take to keep themselves and those around them safe when cooking.

According to the NFPA, the official sponsor of Fire Prevention Week, cooking is the leading cause of home fires and home fire injuries in the United States.

“CAL FIRE encourages all Californians to embrace the 2023 Fire Prevention Week theme, ‘Cooking safety starts with you,’ said Chief Daniel Berlant, recently appointed State Fire Marshal. “Creating fire safe habits in the kitchen will help keep you and your family safe from cooking injuries and ensures you are doing everything you can to prevent a fire from starting in your home while cooking.”

“Year after year, cooking remains the leading cause of home fires by far, accounting for almost half (49 percent) of all U.S. home fires,” said Lorraine Carli, Vice President of outreach and advocacy at NFPA. “These numbers tell us that there is still much work to do when it comes to better educating the public about ways to stay safe when cooking.”

CAL FIRE and NFPA offer these key safety tips to help reduce the risk of a cooking fire:

- Have a “kid- and pet-free zone” of at least 3 feet (1 meter) around the stove or grill and anywhere else hot food or drink is prepared.
- Watch what you heat. Always keep a close eye on what you are cooking. Set a timer to remind you that you are cooking.
- Turn pot handles toward the back of the stove to help prevent accidental burns and always watch young children in the kitchen.
- Always keep a lid nearby when cooking. If a small grease fire starts, slide the lid over the pan and turn off the burner. Leave the pan covered until it is completely cooled. For an oven fire, turn off the heat and keep the door closed.
- If you need to use your fire extinguisher, apply the Pull, Aim, Squeeze, Sweep (PASS) method:
  - Pull the pin to break the seal and test the extinguisher.
  - Aim at the base of the fire and ensure you have a means of escape.
  - Squeeze the operating handle to discharge the extinguishing agent.
  - Sweep from side to side, aiming at the base of the fire until it is completely extinguished. If the fire cannot be extinguished, then retreat to a safe distance from the fire and call 911.

An accessible and working fire extinguisher is fundamental to kitchen safety. Having the correct type of fire extinguisher in an accessible location and knowing how to safely use it is essential to safely being able to put out a fire in your kitchen.

“Taking a few extra steps while in the kitchen could prevent injury, property damage or even death. Please take these tips seriously and practice them every time you are cooking,” said Chief Berlant.

For more information about Fire Prevention Week and cooking safety, visit [www.fpw.org](http://www.fpw.org).  
For more cooking fire safety tips from CAL FIRE, see the [Cooking Fire Safety Fact Sheet](#).

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