

# Kitchen Fires

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What kind of stove do you have in your home? Did you know that the stove is the #1 fire hazard in your kitchen? I'll bet that many of you do know this important fact, but do you know why? Burners on electric stoves stay hot a lot longer than those on gas stoves. The electric burner gets so hot that even after it has been turned off, it holds so much heat that it can cause a towel, or a pot holder, or worse yet your clothes to catch fire before it cools off. Even though the gas burner does not stay as hot for as long as an electric burner, until it cools off it can be very dangerous.

## Important Do's and Don'ts in the Kitchen

### Do's

- **Do** have an adult with you if you are cooking in the kitchen.
- **Do** keep long hair tied back when you are cooking.
- **Do** make sure that, if you have a window near the stove, the curtains are tied back and will not blow near a flame or burner.
- **Do** make sure that the knobs on the stove are difficult for a child to turn.
- **Do** check to make sure that the "on" signal light for the burners is working.
- **Do** turn pan handles to the center of the stove so that children cannot reach them and in order to keep them from being knocked off the stove.
- **Do** put a non-slip mat in front of the stove to keep you from slipping and falling into a burner.
- **Do** check the cords on all appliances regularly for fraying (fraying means worn because of rubbing). Exposed wires could cause sparks or short circuits.
- **Do** keep matches out of the reach of children and in covered metal containers.
- **Do** call your utility company IMMEDIATELY if you smell a gas odor coming from your stove.

### Don'ts

- **Don't** put towels, potholders, or dishrags near a stove burner.
- **Don't** wear loose-fitting clothes when you cook, and **don't** reach across the top of the stove when you are cooking.
- **Don't** put cookies, candy, or other treats in the cabinets above the stove. Young children may try to reach them and accidentally start the burners, start a fire, or have their clothes catch on fire.
- **Don't** store spray cans near the stove.
- **Don't** let small children near an open oven door. They can be burned by the heat or by falling onto the door or into the oven.
- **Don't** lean against the stove to keep warm.
- **Don't** use towels as potholders. They may catch on fire.
- **Don't** overload an electrical outlet with several appliances or extension cords. The cords or plugs may overheat and cause a fire.
- **Don't** use water to put out a grease fire. ONLY use baking soda, salt, or a tight lid. Always keep a box of baking soda near the stove.
- **Don't** use radios or other small appliances (mixers, blenders) near the sink.