

## Fire department warns to be careful with holiday cooking

With the festive holiday season here, Caledon Fire and Emergency Services is urging everyone to pay special attention when cooking.

Provincial statistics reveal that careless cooking is the number one cause of fires and the second leading cause of fatal fires.

“Take a few minutes to test your smoke alarms and make sure everyone in the home knows exactly what to do in the case of an emergency,” Fire Chief Bailey said. “Developing and practising a home escape plan with your family can be a life-saving exercise this time of year.”

The hustle and bustle of the holidays can often increase the risk of a fire starting, often by unattended cooking, and in many cases, when alcohol is involved.

Smoking is another leading cause of fires during the holiday season.

“Smokers should extinguish cigarettes in large deep ashtrays, not in plant pots which may contain peat moss or shredded bark that can easily ignite,” Bailey said. “Ashes should be emptied in a metal container, not the garbage can, and put outside.”

Enjoy a fire safe holiday season by following these tips:

• Stay in the kitchen when cooking. If a pot catches fire, don't try to move it. Cover the pot with a lid to smother the flames and turn off the burner.

• Keep things that can burn, such as cooking utensils and paper towels, a safe distance away from the stove.

• Ensure the stove and oven are turned off as soon as you finish cooking. Double check the stove and oven before going to bed.

• Cigarettes can smolder among upholstered items for hours before igniting. Check sofas and chairs for cigarettes that may have fallen between the cushions. Provide large, deep ashtrays for smokers.

• Drink responsibly. Excessive alcohol consumption is a contributing factor in many residential fires.

• Install and maintain working smoke and carbon monoxide alarms outside all sleeping areas of the home.

• Develop and practice a home escape plan with everyone in the home.

Visit [www.caledon/fireresources](http://www.caledon/fireresources) for more information and safety tips.