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OFFICE OF THE STATE
FIRE COMMISSIONER



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INSURANCE DEPARTMENT

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State Fire and Insurance Commissioners Urge Pennsylvanians to Make Safety a Priority This Thanksgiving

Harrisburg, PA – State Fire Commissioner Tim Solobay and Insurance Commissioner Teresa Miller are reminding Pennsylvanians to celebrate Thanksgiving safely. According to the U.S. Fire Administration, the average number of home fires on Thanksgiving Day is normally double the average number of fires in homes all other days.

“As we celebrate family and friends on this holiday, remember to take the proper precautions when working in your kitchen or preparing your turkey outdoors,” said Solobay. “Not taking proper care can have tragic consequences.”

Solobay provided the following tips to keep citizens safe this weekend:

- Stay in the kitchen when you are cooking - frying, broiling or boiling - at high temperatures.
- Make your cooking area safe. Move things that can burn away from the stove. Turn pot handles toward the back so they can't be bumped.
- Watch what you're cooking. Use a timer when roasting a turkey or baking.
- Be prepared. Keep a large pan lid or baking sheet handy in case you need to smother a pan fire.
- Stay awake and alert while you're cooking. If you see smoke or the grease starts to boil in your pan, turn the burner off.
- Prevent burns. Wear short sleeves when you cook, or roll them up. Don't lean over the burner. Use potholders and oven mitts to handle hot cookware. Be aware of cooking pots, lids and pot handles that can get dangerously hot.
- Keep children and pets away from hot stoves, grills and fryers.
- Turkey fryers can easily tip over, spilling hot cooking oil over a large area. Use caution when near the fryers and ensure they are kept on a flat, stable surface.
- Do not overfill cooking pots and pans which could cause cooking oil to spill or splatter when food is being prepared.
- Even a small amount of cooking oil spilling on a hot burner can cause a large fire. Without thermostat controls, deep fryers can overheat oil to the point of starting a fire.

“Following these tips will help your family prevent a costly and potentially dangerous situation,” Commissioner Miller said.

Homeowners insurance will cover repairs to the structure of your home, personal belongings, and liability if any holiday guests are injured. However, if you reside in a rented property, your belongings will not be covered unless you have a renters insurance policy.

For more information on homeowners and renters insurance or to contact the Insurance Department's Consumer Services Bureau, visit www.insurance.pa.gov or call 1-877-881-6388. For more fire safety tips, visit www.osfc.pa.gov.

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