



Aurora Fire Department Life Safety Division

Safety Bulletin

Deep Fat Frying Your Turkey

The Aurora Fire Department provides this information as a public service with the intent of improving safety within the city of Aurora and "ensuring a safe community". This bulletin is intended to provide general information related to deep fat frying your turkey and is not designed nor can be relied upon to completely cover all situations. Your safety can best be assured through continued personal vigilance, education and diligence.

The latest trend in preparing a Turkey is Deep Frying. However, if you don't take precautions, you may end up with an injury or a fire. Deep Fryers can be dangerous because:

- Many units easily tip over, spilling the five gallons of hot oil within the cooking pot.
- If the cooking pot is overfilled with oil, the oil may spill out of the unit when the turkey is placed into the cooking pot. Oil may hit the burner/flames causing a fire to engulf the entire unit.
- Partially frozen turkeys placed into the fryer can cause a spillover effect. This too, may result in an extensive fire.
- With no thermostat controls, the units also have the potential to overheat the oil to the point of combustion.
- The sides of the cooking pot, lid and pot handles get dangerously hot, posing severe burn hazards.

The Aurora Fire Department wants you and your family to have a safe and Happy Thanksgiving. Just follow these simple cooking and safety rules:

Deep Fried Turkey Cooking Tips:

- Follow your fryer's instructions.
- Only deep fry smaller turkeys up to 12 pounds.
- Use oils with high smoke points such as peanut, canola and safflower. Peanut oil adds flavor, but it can be a concern if guests have peanut allergies.
- To determine how much oil you'll need, put the turkey in the basket and place in the pot. Add water until it reaches one to two inches above the turkey. Lift the turkey out, and use a ruler to measure the distance from the water to the top of the fryer. Pour out the water and dry the fryer completely.
- Remember that it can take anywhere from 20 minutes to an hour to heat the oil, depending on the outside temp., wind, and weather.
- Before frying, pat the turkey dry with paper towels to keep the hot oil from spattering and popping.
- **Slowly** lower the turkey into the oil, and maintain an oil temp of 350 F. Fry the turkey for three to four minutes per pound or about 35 to 42 minutes for a 10- to 12-pound turkey.

Safety Tips:

- Turkey fryers should always be used outdoors a safe distance from buildings and any other material that can burn.
- Never use turkey fryers on wooden decks or in garages.
- Make sure the fryers are used on a flat surface to reduce accidental tipping.
- Never leave the fryer unattended. Most units do not have thermostat controls. If you don't watch the fryer carefully, the oil will continue to heat until it catches fire.
- Never let children or pets near the fryer when in use. Even after use, never allow children or pets near the turkey fryer. The oil inside the cooking pot can remain dangerously hot, hours after use.
- To avoid oil spillover, do not overfill the fryer.
- Use well-insulated potholders or oven mitts when touching pot or lid handles. If possible, wear safety goggles to protect your eyes from oil splatter.
- Make sure the turkey is completely thawed and be careful with marinades. Oil and water don't mix, and water causes oil to spill over, causing a fire or even an explosion hazard.
- The National Turkey Federation recommends refrigerator thawing and to allow approximately 24 hours for every five pounds of bird thawed in the refrigerator.
- Keep an all-purpose fire extinguisher nearby. Never use water to extinguish a grease fire. Remember to use your best judgment when attempting to fight a fire. If the fire is manageable, use an all-purpose fire extinguisher. If the fire increases, immediately call 9-1-1 for help.

Even after use, never allow children or pets near the turkey fryer. The oil inside the cooking pots remains dangerously hot, hours after use.
