
Hon Corey Wingard MP

Minister for Police, Correctional Services and Emergency Services

Friday 31 May 2019

Winter's arrival signals cooking fire risk

As temperatures plummet and winter begins, South Australia's fire services are launching **Home Fire Safety Week** to warn householders of the greatest winter house fire risk; cooking.

Each year, Metropolitan Fire Service (MFS) and SA Country Fire Service (CFS) firefighters battle nearly 300 cooking fires in homes across South Australia.

The blazes can consume homes and potentially lead to injuries or loss of life.

Minister for Emergency Services Corey Wingard urged householders to be vigilant when cooking up a storm this winter.

"There have been more than 1,100 fires caused by home cooking over the past four years in South Australia," Minister Wingard said.

"We all know how easy it can be to get distracted while cooking given our busy lifestyles, but these statistics show how important it is to keep focused on what's happening in the kitchen."

MFS Chief Officer, Michael Morgan, said cooking is the leading cause of winter related house fires.

"We're asking people to avoid distractions that might take them away from the kitchen. A couple of messages to remember are '*Keep looking when cooking*' and '*Stand by your pan*'. People should heed them to prevent a fire from starting.

"If you're someone who is easily distracted or who loses track of time, set a timer when cooking with a noisy alarm. This will prevent you leaving food on the stove or in the oven for too long," MFS Chief Officer Morgan said.

The fire services advise householders to store a dry chemical powder fire extinguisher with a minimum 5B(E) rating and a fire blanket near the exit to the kitchen.

CFS Chief Officer, Greg Nettleton said having these simple, inexpensive tools on hand could prevent a small fire from consuming your home.

"But, if a fire is too large or overwhelming, do not attempt to fight it. If conditions allow, turn the oven or stove off. Evacuate yourself and any other occupants immediately and call Triple Zero for fire service attendance.

"The fire services also urge the community to NEVER put water on an oil or fat fire and NEVER try to move a pan that's caught alight," CFS Chief Officer Nettleton said.



The MFS and CFS have the following top five cooking fire safety tips:

- **NEVER** leave cooking unattended. *Keep looking when cooking and Stand by your pan!*
- Store a dry chemical powder fire extinguisher and fire blanket near the exit to the kitchen for use in case of a small cooking fire.
- **NEVER** throw water onto an oil or fat fire.
- **NEVER** try to move a pan that has caught on fire.
- **DON'T** try to fight a fire that is too large. Switch off the oven or stove if it's safe to do so, then **EVACUATE** and call Triple Zero (000).

For detailed cooking fire safety information, please visit the MFS website [here](#).

Combine the above home fire safety tips with hardwired, interconnected smoke alarms that are less than 10 years old and a Home Fire Escape Plan.

TYPE OF FIRE	FIRES OVER THE PAST 4 CALENDAR YEARS	12 MONTH AVERAGE
Cooking / kitchen fires	1,113 fires	278 fires