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The kitchen is the heart of the home, especially at Thanksgiving and kids love to be involved in holiday preparations. Safety in the kitchen is important, especially on Thanksgiving Day when there is a lot of activity and people at home.

Safety Tips

- Stay in the kitchen when you are cooking on the stovetop so you can keep an eye on the food.
- Stay in the home when cooking your turkey and check on it frequently.
- Turkey Fryers – Follow manufacturers' instructions and keep away from structures.
- Keep children away from the stove. The stove will be hot and kids should stay 3 feet away.
- Make sure kids stay away from hot food and liquids. The steam or splash from vegetables, gravy or coffee could cause serious burns.
- Keep the floor clear so you don't trip over kids, toys, pocketbooks or bags.
- Keep knives out of the reach of children.
- Be sure electric cords from an electric knife, coffee maker, plate warmer or mixer are not dangling off the counter within easy reach of a child.
- Keep matches and utility lighters out of the reach of children — up high in a locked cabinet.
- Do not leave lit candles unattended, especially around children.
- Make sure your smoke alarms are working. Test them by pushing the test button.

If you have any questions about Holiday Safety or fire safety in general, please contact the Fire Prevention Bureau at 541-450-6200. Happy Thanksgiving from the Grants Pass Department of Public Safety!

Grants Pass Department

Of Public Safety

Contact Information:

Non-Emergency

541-450-6260

Fire

541-450-6200

City Hall

541-450-6000

Every year in the United States, during the Holiday Season, tragedy strikes hundreds of families. Statistics show fires related to candles, Christmas Trees, holiday lighting, cooking and portable space heaters cause a dramatic increase in residential fires. In recent years deep frying a turkey has become a popular way to help prepare a tasty holiday dinner. People are urged to carefully read all instructions prior to use and follow all precautions. A fryer that uses an open flame heat source should never be operated indoors or under a roof covering. There have been numerous fires attributed to improper use of large, open deep fryers which should only be used outdoors and under close supervision. The Grants Pass Department of Public Safety wants you to have a safe Holiday Season. Please review the following safety tips with your family.

1. Make a fresh cut on your tree, stand it in water and keep it watered at all times.
2. Keep your tree away from candles, heaters, fireplaces, and doors.
3. Use only fire resistive decorations.
4. When needles begin to fall, remove the tree from the home.
5. Check decorative lights for frayed wires and loose sockets. Use only UL approved lights.
6. Do not overload your circuits, keep extension cord use to a minimum and use the appropriate wire size. Use the shortest cord possible.
7. Unplug your decorative lights and extinguish all candles when you leave your home or before going to bed. Never leave candles unattended! Remember "When You Go Out, Blow It Out".
8. Practice safe cooking behaviors. Prevent fires, scalds and burns.
9. Post your address with at least 3" high reflective numbers within view of the street.
10. Check your flue and keep it clean.
11. Test smoke and carbon monoxide alarms. They save lives!
12. Keep portable space heaters away from combustibles. Unplug when not in use.
13. Prepare for emergencies by practicing your fire escape plan, and not blocking the exit window in each sleeping area.
14. Keep a fire extinguisher handy and know how to use it.

If you have any questions about Holiday Safety or fire safety in general, please contact the Fire Prevention Bureau at 541-450-6200. Happy Holidays from the Grants Pass Department of Public Safety!

Wood Stove Safety

There's no place like home while watching a roaring fire in your fireplace on a cold day. Fireplaces and wood burning stoves can provide economical heat. When these sources of warmth are not properly maintained, they can be dangerous and could result in a chimney fire.

When wood is burning, it gives off creosote, tars and resins. These products collect in the flue liner. If these products are allowed to build up, they may ignite and burn vigorously inside the chimney. Creosote ignites at 451 degrees and can turn anybody's chimney into a raging inferno of 2,100 degrees within seconds.

The following tips are provided to you from your Fire Prevention Bureau.

- Chimneys should be inspected and cleaned by professionals who use wire brushes and hi-tech vacuum cleaners.
- Home flues equipped with wood burning stoves should be inspected prior to wood burning season. Dangerous deposits can build up in any flue, even those venting coal, oil or gas furnaces.
- Check your flue regularly for any obstructions such as squirrel or bird nests, debris, etc.
- Ask your fire department or stove and fireplace accessory store about special chimney fire extinguishers; keep one handy for every fireplace or stove. A standard ABC extinguisher should be on hand.
- Learn about seasoned woods and which type of woods is best to burn. Only hardwoods should be used as fuel, since softwoods have a high content of creosote and resin. Remember, hardwood trees have leaves and softwood trees have needles.
- Building materials, such as 2X4's, paneling, plywood and treated lumber should never be used as fuel due to a high heat release rate and may contain adhesives and creosote. Most also give off extremely toxic and harmful gases.
- Open the draft wide; do not pile on the wood and smother the fire because that builds up creosote in your stove and chimney. High flames burning hot will burn clean.
- Install a spark shield/arrestor or wire screen on top of your chimney. The chimney should rise at least two feet higher than the roof peak or any tall, nearby objects.
- Always use a fireplace screen or glass doors. Do not keep your wood burning stove door open unless you have a screen or glass door backup.
- Clean ashes out of fireplace or stove interior regularly and dispose of properly. Do not place in card board boxes or paper bags.

Questions about fireplace installation? Call 474-6355. Questions about Fire Safety? Call 450-6200

During the holidays keep in mind that criminals could be on the prowl looking for you to be their easy target.

- Don't leave your bags unattended.
- Carry your purse under your arm or your wallet in an inside jacket pocket – not a back pants pocket.
- Check all credit card statements for false charges.
- Lock shopping bags in the trunk.
- Avoid carrying large amounts of cash.
- Minimize shopping after dark or when alone. Take a friend or family member with you.
- Avoid overloading yourself with packages.

Be aware of your surroundings at all times and you'll limit the possibility of becoming a target.

Keep your family safe this holiday season.

- If possible, leave small children at home with a trusted babysitter.
- Teach your child to go to a store clerk and ask for help in case your child is separated from you while shopping.
- Teach children to stay close to you at all times. Never allow children to make unaccompanied trips to the restroom.
- Children should never be allowed to go to the parking lot or the car alone and they should never be left alone in the car.
- Teach children their full name, address, and telephone number to give to a police officer or mall security only.
- Teach children to immediately inform you if a stranger is bothering them.

Stolen Vehicle

The Grants Pass Department of Public Safety has received numerous calls regarding vehicles being stolen. On average a vehicle is stolen in the United States every 21 minutes. Vehicle thefts cost the victim time and money, and often the vehicles are used in the commission of other crimes. Vehicles are stolen during the day and at night. They occur at shopping plazas and when the vehicle is parked in front of the owners residence.

In order to decrease the likelihood of becoming a victim of a vehicle theft, you should:

- **Always lock your vehicle and keep your windows rolled up. An unlocked vehicle is an easy target for thieves, even when it is parked in your driveway.**
- **Park in high traffic, well lit areas.**
- **If you have a trailer or another vehicle with a VIN (ex: quad, dirt bike), secure it to your primary vehicle with a lock to prevent easy thefts.**
- **Never leave your running car unattended, even to run into a business or store.**
- **Never leave any keys in the car or ignition, inside a garage or in a hide a key box.**
- **Look into purchasing a vehicle theft tracking/security system, especially if you own a frequently stolen model vehicle.**
- **Copy your license plate and vehicle identification number (VIN) onto a card and keep them with you. The police department will need this information to take a report.**
- **If you need to warm up your vehicle, don't leave the vehicle unattended. If you are waiting in the vehicle, lock the doors. If someone approaches your vehicle, don't unlock the door or roll the window down all the way. This will decrease your likelihood of being kidnapped.**
- **Report any suspicious activity that you see in parking lots or in your neighborhood.**
- **If your vehicle is stolen, report it to the police department immediately.**

If you have questions, please contact Officer Lesley Donaghy Grants Pass Department of Public Safety Crime Prevention Bureau at 450-6245.