



## COUNTY OF PRINCE WILLIAM

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DEPARTMENT OF  
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### PRESS RELEASE

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### The Dangers of Turkey Frying

The holiday season is just around the corner. The house is filled with the aroma of food especially a piping hot turkey filled with your favorite stuffing browning to perfection in the kitchen oven. However, today, this traditional way of cooking a turkey has changed. Many individuals are intrigued with frying turkeys. Turkey frying is a method by which turkeys are placed in a vat of cooking oil and fried at a high temperature. The turkey is cooked thoroughly and rapidly. On the outside, the turkey is brown and crisp while the inside is moist and juicy. The time to prepare and cook a turkey is cut dramatically during this process. However, this method of cooking is known to be dangerous and can cause severe injuries and extensive property damage.

The National Fire Prevention Association (NFPA) ([www.nfpa.gov](http://www.nfpa.gov)) recommends to those individuals who prefer their turkey to be prepared in this manner to seek out professional establishments that cater to this method of cooking, i.e. grocery stores, specialty food retailers and restaurants.

The NFPA states the dangers that may occur if you're considering frying turkeys:

- Hot oil may splash or spill at any point during the cooking process, when the turkey is placed in the fryer or removed.
- Fryers designed for outdoor use and using a stand are considered particularly vulnerable to upset or collapse, followed by a major spill of hot oil.
- In deep frying, oil is heated to temperatures of 350 degrees Fahrenheit or more. Cooking oil is combustible, and if it is heated beyond its cooking temperature, its vapors can ignite.

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- Propane-fired turkey fryers are designed for outdoor use, particularly for Thanksgiving, by which time both rain and snow are common in many parts of the country. If rain or snow strikes the exposed hot cooking oil, the result can be a splattering of the hot oil or a conversion of the rain or snow to steam, either of which can lead to burns. Use of propane-fired turkey fryers indoors to avoid bad weather is contrary to their design and dangerous in its own right. Fires have occurred when turkey fryers were used in a garage or barn or under eaves to keep the appliance out of the rain.
- Many turkeys are purchased frozen, and may not be fully thawed when cooking begins which creates the risk of contact between hot cooking oil and water, which can mean an oil splatter or a cloud of hot steam.
- Use of the electric turkey fryers introduces a burn hazard to the home because of close quarters and a particular danger to children and others who are gathered for a festive occasion.
- In order to be considered acceptably safe, a turkey fryer would have to be designed to reduce the risk of hot oil release to a negligible level at every stage of the cooking process.

Although some turkey fryer packaging displays independent product safety testing labels, NFPA indicates that turkey fryers are not suitable for acceptably safe use by even a well-informed and careful consumer and discourages the use of turkey fryers except by properly trained professionals using professional-quality equipment.

To view a video presentation of the dangers of turkey frying, visit Underwriters Laboratories, Inc. at <http://www.ul.com/consumers/turkeys.html>.

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