

# USARPAC Safety Gram

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## Thanksgiving Safety

Thanksgiving is a holiday that brings friends and family together to share a good meal, conversation, and laughter. The kitchen is the heart of the home, especially at Thanksgiving. Safety in the kitchen is important, especially on Thanksgiving Day when there is a lot of activity and people at home. Take a few minutes to review these Thanksgiving Day kitchen safety tips, and enjoy the holiday without worry.



### *Food preparation safety is important, especially on Thanksgiving Day*

- ◆ Wash your hands with soap and water before you start any food preparation.
- ◆ Make sure working areas and surfaces, utensils and plates are also clean.
- ◆ Use separate cutting or chopping boards for meats and for fruits and vegetables. Avoid putting cooked food on cutting boards that have touched raw food.
- ◆ Avoid wiping your hands that have touched raw food with a dish towel.
- ◆ Keep raw food away from vegetables and side dishes that will not be cooked.
- ◆ Use a timer and do kitchen checks when simmering, baking, broiling, and roasting.
- ◆ Cook the turkey immediately after thawing. Don't slow cook or partially cook the turkey, and check the temperature of the turkey with a meat thermometer to make sure every part of the turkey reaches a minimum internal temperature of 165° F.
- ◆ Let turkey stand for 20 minutes before carving to allow juices to set.
- ◆ Stuffing the turkey is not recommended. Cook the stuffing separately. Stuffing should also reach a minimum temperature of 165° F.
- ◆ Leftovers need to be put away within two hours after serving the food.
- ◆ Food should be stored in shallow containers. Meat should be removed from the bone before being put away.

### *Keep these general safety tips in mind whenever you cook up a feast*

- ◆ Stay in the kitchen when you are cooking on the stovetop so you can keep an eye on the food. If deep frying a turkey, keep the fryer outside, away from walls, fences and other structures.
- ◆ Keep potholders and food wrappers at least three feet away from heat sources while cooking
- ◆ Keep the floor clear so you don't trip over kids, toys, pocketbooks, or bags.
- ◆ Make sure your smoke alarms are working. Test them by pushing the test button.
- ◆ Wear tighter fitting clothing with shorter sleeves when cooking
- ◆ Make sure all stoves, ovens, and ranges have been turned off when you leave the kitchen
- ◆ Set timers to keep track of turkeys and other food items that require extended cooking times
- ◆ Keep children away from the stove. The stove will be hot and kids should stay 3 feet away.
- ◆ Establish a safe zone around the stove while cooking - no children or pets within three feet
- ◆ Turn handles of pots and pans on the stove inward to avoid accidents.

***As a holiday cook and host, keep the safety of your guests uppermost in your mind. Remember these suggestions and have a happy and safe holiday.***

