
Did you know?

Since 2001 Vanderbilt had 6 cooking fires, with no injuries:

- A towel that was placed too near a burner ignited.
- Food cooking in an unattended microwave caught fire on two separate occasions.
- Grease in a frying pan overheated and caught fire on three separate occasions.

Each year fire alarms sound in several residence halls, when cooking food is left unattended until it starts to smolder.

Prevent Cooking Fires!

- **Never leave cooking food unattended.** Keep a close watch on food cooking on a stove top and inside both conventional and microwave ovens. A serious fire can start in seconds. Most cooking fires occur when the cook is distracted by a phone call, knock on the door or another interruption.
- Wear short, tight-fitting sleeves when cooking. Loose clothing can dangle over stove burners and catch fire.
- Turn pot handles inward to avoid spills and always use a potholder to grasp handles.
- Keep towels, pot holders and curtains away from cooking surfaces.
- Heat oil gradually to avoid burns from splattering grease. Use extra caution when preparing deep-fried foods.
- Clean cooking surfaces regularly to prevent grease buildup. Accumulated grease can catch fire.
- Double-check the kitchen before you leave. Make sure all appliances are turned off.

Responding to a cooking fire:

- Only attempt to extinguish a fire in its early stages, when it is **small**.
- Always have an escape route.
- Extinguish a **stovetop** fire:
 - Put a lid on the pan to smother the fire.
 - Sprinkle baking soda on a very small fire can sometimes extinguish it.
 - **Never throw water on a grease fire!**
 - If you use an extinguisher on a stove top fire, **start spraying extinguishing agent from at least 10 feet away from the stove top, aiming slightly above the pan rim!** If you are too close to the fire, the force of sprayed extinguishing agent can spread burning grease across the kitchen, spreading the fire, as occurred in the photo, below.
 - Once the fire is extinguished,, turn off the heat and let the pot cool.
- Extinguish a **conventional** or **microwave oven** fire:
 - Unplug the oven or turn it off.
 - Keep the oven door **closed**.
- If you cannot control the fire quickly:
 - **Evacuate!**
 - Close the door to your room or apartment on the way out.
 - Pull the manual fire alarm at the stairwell entrance or floor exit.

