



The University of Vermont

**IT'S NATIONAL FIRE PREVENTION WEEK:
"Cooking Safety Starts With YOU. Pay Attention to Fire Prevention."
October 8-14, 2023**

This week is Fire Prevention Week in the United States. Fire Prevention Week is the longest running public health and safety observance on record. The President of the United States has signed a proclamation proclaiming a national observance during that week every year since 1925.

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) has been the official sponsor of Fire Prevention Week since 1922. This year's Fire Prevention Week campaign, **"Cooking safety starts with YOU. Pay attention to fire prevention."** works to educate everyone about simple but important actions they can take to keep themselves and those around them safe.

According to NFPA, cooking is the leading cause of home fires and home fire injuries in the United States. Unattended cooking is the leading cause of cooking fires and deaths. "Year after year, cooking remains the leading cause of home fires by far, accounting for half (49 percent) of all U.S. home fires," said Lorraine Carli, vice president of outreach and advocacy at NFPA. "These numbers tell us that there is still much work to do when it comes to better educating the public about ways to stay safe when cooking."

Check out these [key safety tips](#) to help reduce the risk of a cooking fire:

1. Watch what you heat. Always keep a close eye on what you are cooking. Set a timer to remind you that you are cooking.
2. Turn pot handles toward the back of the stove. Always keep a lid nearby when cooking. If a small grease fire starts, slide the lid over the pan and turn off the burner.
3. Have a "kid- and pet-free zone" of at least 3 feet (1 meter) around the stove or grill and anywhere else hot food or drink is prepared or carried.

If you are a student, faculty member, or staff who live on or off campus in university or privately-owned housing, these cooking safety messages are just as applicable and important. Partnering with the Burlington Fire Department, UVM Residential Life and the Department of Emergency Management conduct fire evacuation drills in each residence hall in the fall semester. Evacuation route maps are posted by Residential Life near the door in each student room, and many other buildings on campus also have posted evacuation maps as part of an ongoing initiative to update evacuation plan resources in every UVM building on and off campus. Any member of the UVM community can take our "Evacuation Procedures" and "Fire Safety" short course modules, under the "Fire Safety & Respirator Use" section of the [UVM Risk Management & Safety online training courses page](#).

As a general reminder, please review [UVM's Fire Safety Policy](#): "All employees, students, and visitors are required to evacuate a building when the fire alarm sounds. No person may tamper with fire protection devices, create fire hazards within or near buildings, or cause impediments to emergency egress from buildings." These are important procedures designed to keep everyone safe.

To learn more about Fire Prevention Week, go to www.nfpa.org/fpw. For more information about fire and life safety initiatives at the University of Vermont, visit <https://www.uvm.edu/emergency/fire> or contact University Fire Marshal Barry Simays at firesafe@uvm.edu or (802) 656-8249.