

# EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS NEWSLETTER

DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AND SECURITY



Link to join webinar: <https://youtu.be/zsZ5hDZTrh0>

## Cooking Safety Tips for the Holiday Season

With the holiday season fast approaching, many kitchens will become busy and crowded as holiday treats are prepared. Traditional holiday foods bring joy and help create cherished memories in our homes. However, cooking accidents are also the leading causes of home fires. To ensure a safe and enjoyable holiday, it is important to observe safe practices when preparing meals in kitchens which are bustling with more activity than usual. Follow these tips to prevent accidents from ruining your holiday:

- Prepare your kitchen by keeping an all-purpose fire extinguisher nearby. The extinguisher should be classified as suitable for oil or grease fires.
- Always stay in the kitchen when preparing food on the stovetop.
- Keep an eye on what you fry! Fried foods are responsible for the majority of kitchen fires.
- Make sure you know how to handle a grease fire! Grease fires occur when oil becomes too hot. If oil begins to smoke, immediately turn off your heat source and never use water to extinguish a grease fire—this only cause the fire to grow.
- Only use turkey fryers out of doors. Make sure that the surface underneath the fryer is sturdy and not flammable.
- If you use a gas stove, make sure the burner dials are completely turned off when you are finished. Stove tops which are left on when no flame is burning can cause explosions due to excess gas escaping.
- Make sure your sleeves, scarves, and other clothing is not loose or dangling in your way while cooking.
- If there is fire inside the oven, turn the oven off and do not open the door. Oxygen feeds fire, so it is best to keep the oven closed until the fire is completely out.
- Keep children and pets away from hot cooking surfaces and utensils. When possible, use the back burners of the stove to keep dangerous items out of the reach of small children.

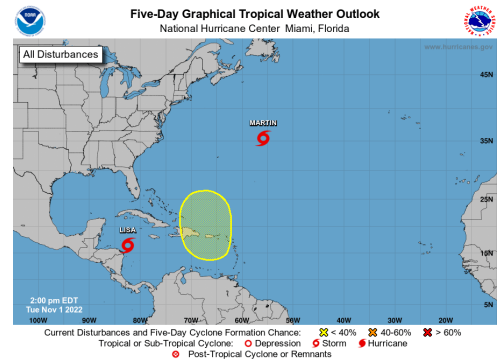
For more information and resources cooking safety from the National Fire Prevention Association, visit: [Safety with cooking equipment | NFPA](#)

## Hurricane Season Isn't Over!

Hurricane season is still active until November 30<sup>th</sup>! There is currently activity in the Atlantic Ocean in multiple spots.

Want to keep up to date with hurricanes? Visit: [National Hurricane Center \(noaa.gov\)](https://www.nhc.noaa.gov)

You can also learn what to do before, during, and after a hurricane using the Community Emergency Response Guide (CERG's) Hurricanes/Tropical Storms Hazard page. Visit: [Hurricanes/Tropical Storms | Emergency \(fairfaxcounty.gov\)](https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/emergency/hurricanes-tropical-storms-hazard)



## Did You ShakeOut?

In October, Fairfax County participated in the Great SouthEast ShakeOut, an earthquake drill that occurs each October. 2,236,257 participants were registered for this year's drill and 1,146,204 people from Virginia participated.

As a review, if you feel shaking immediately:

1. DROP where you are, onto your hands and knees. This position protects you from being knocked down and reduces your chances of being hit by falling or flying objects.
2. COVER your head and neck with one arm and hand.
  - If a sturdy table or desk is nearby, crawl underneath for shelter.
  - If no shelter is nearby, crawl next to an interior wall.
  - Stay on your knees; bend over to protect vital organs.
3. HOLD ON until the shaking stops.
  - Under shelter: hold on to it with one hand; be ready to move with your shelter if it shifts
  - No shelter: hold on to your head and neck with both arms and hands.



If you have difficulty getting onto the ground, or cannot get back up again without help, review the graphic to show the different ways to protect yourself.

CERG Earthquake Video: [https://youtu.be/7XchiTGq\\_YY](https://youtu.be/7XchiTGq_YY)

CERG Earthquake Hazard Page: [Earthquake | Emergency \(fairfaxcounty.gov\)](https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/emergency/earthquake-hazard)

Additional accessibility recommendations: [EarthquakeCountry.org/accessibility](https://www.earthquakecountry.org/accessibility).

## Online Shopping Safety

Think about how you're searching online. Are you searching from home, on public Wi-Fi? Are you going to trusted vendors? You wouldn't go into a store with boarded up windows and without signage, the same rules apply online. If it looks suspicious, something's probably not right.

Before providing any personal or financial information, make sure that you are interacting with a reputable, established vendor. Some attackers may try to trick you by creating malicious websites that appear to be legitimate. If you have never heard of the company before, check twice before handing over your information.

CERG Cyber Attack Page: [Cyber Attack | Emergency \(fairfaxcounty.gov\)](https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/emergency/cyber-attack)

Additional recommendations: [Holiday Online Shopping | CISA](https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/emergency/holiday-online-shopping)