



R B F & R S

news release

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Keep Looking While You're Cooking This Chip Week

Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service (RBFRS) is supporting National Chip Week (11-17 February) by urging people to take more care in the kitchen.

Most accidental house fires start in the kitchen, with 30,512 fires reported nationally in 2005¹. One of the most common causes of fire is leaving cooking unattended, so it is essential not to let yourself become distracted. If you need to leave the kitchen for any reason, take pans off the heat and turn off the oven.

Deep fat frying can also be a serious fire risk. Rather than using a chip pan, a far healthier and safer alternative is to cook oven chips or, if you prefer to fry your chips, use a thermostatically-controlled fryer instead.

The good news is that many kitchen fires can be prevented by following these simple tips:

- Never leave cooking unattended, even for a minute.
- Don't cook if you've been drinking alcohol or taking medication.
- Keep the oven and grill clean – a build up of fat can easily catch fire.
- Don't fill a chip pan more than one third full of oil.
- Never throw water on a chip pan.
- If fire breaks out, don't tackle it yourself: **get out, stay out and call 999**.

Jane Weller, Community Safety Officer, said: "Kitchen fires can cause devastating damage and even loss of life but they can be easily prevented by taking a few precautions. Fitting smoke alarms on every level of your house can also help to keep you and your family safe by giving you precious time to escape if fire breaks out."

ENDS

¹ CLG Fire Statistics UK, 2005