



**American
Red Cross**

New Mexico Chapter
7445 Pan American Way
Fwy. NE
Albuquerque, NM 87109
505-265-8514
Kathy Segura-Salas,
Executive Director
505-690-9379

News Release
NEWS RELEASE

Jim Gilloon
Regional Public Information
Officer
480-616-9511
Jim.gilloon3@redcross.org

**Red Cross Offers 20 Ways to
Safely Cook and Travel this Thanksgiving**
*Cooking fires increase on Thanksgiving;
Millions expected take to highways to visit loved ones*

Phoenix, Arizona (November 15, 2018) — Thanksgiving is just around the corner, and millions of people will soon take to the road and kitchen to share the holiday with loved ones. Because Thanksgiving is a peak time for congested travel and home cooking fires, the American Red Cross asks everyone to follow the steps below to help stay safe this holiday.

COOKING SAFETY

Each year, Thanksgiving is one of the leading days for home cooking fires. You can help protect yourself and your family from home fires—the nation’s most frequent disaster—by testing your smoke alarms and practicing your escape plan with free resources from the Red Cross Home Fire Campaign (redcross.org/homefires).

“Cooking fires can destroy a family’s Thanksgiving—and sadly, in some cases, their home,” said Jim Gilloon, Regional Public Information Officer, American Red Cross AZ, NM, El Paso TX. “Please prepare now with your loved ones to safely enjoy the holiday.”

1. Install a smoke alarm near your kitchen, on each level of your home, inside bedrooms and outside sleeping areas. Use the test button to check it each month. Replace all batteries at least once a year if your smoke alarm requires it.
2. Consider purchasing a fire extinguisher to keep in your kitchen. Contact your local fire department to take training on the proper use of extinguishers.
3. While cooking, don’t wear loose clothing or sleeves that dangle.
4. If you are frying, grilling or broiling food, never leave it unattended—stay in the kitchen. If you leave the kitchen for even a short period of time, turn off the stove. Unattended cooking is the leading cause of cooking fires.
5. If you’re simmering, baking, roasting or broiling food, check it regularly.
6. Use a timer to remind yourself that the stove or oven is on.
7. Keep kids and pets away from the cooking area. Make them stay at least three feet away from the stove.
8. Keep anything that can catch fire—pot holders, oven mitts, wooden utensils, paper or plastic bags, food packaging, towels or curtains—away from your stove, oven or any other appliance in the kitchen that generates heat.
9. Clean cooking surfaces on a regular basis to prevent grease buildup.
10. Always check the kitchen before going to bed or leaving home to make sure all stoves, ovens, and small appliances are turned off.

HIGHWAY SAFETY

Each year, millions of people drive to spend Thanksgiving with family and friends—making it one of the busiest times for road traffic. If you're planning to travel by car, follow these safety tips:

1. **Make sure your car is in good condition for a road trip.**
2. **Pack an emergency preparedness kit, supplies and a first aid kit in the trunk.**
3. **Share travel plans with a family member or friend.**
4. **Check the weather before departing and along your route. Plan for travel around any storms that may be coming.**
5. **Be well rested and alert.**
6. **Buckle up, slow down and don't drive impaired.**
7. **Follow the rules of the road and use caution in work zones.**
8. **Give your full attention to the road. Avoid distractions such as cell phones.**
9. **Make frequent stops. During long trips, rotate drivers. If you're too tired to drive, stop and get some rest.**
10. **If you have car trouble, pull off the road as far as possible.**

About the American Red Cross:

The American Red Cross shelters, feeds and provides emotional support to victims of disasters; supplies about 40 percent of the nation's blood; teaches skills that save lives; provides international humanitarian aid; and supports military members and their families. The Red Cross is a not-for-profit organization that depends on volunteers and the generosity of the American public to perform its mission. For more information, please visit redcross.org or cruzrojaamericana.org, or visit us on Twitter at @RedCross.

###