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# A safety checklist for food service managers in residential facilities.

From 2006 to 2010, U.S. fire departments responded to more than 6,200 fires per year in health care facilities. About 50% of those began in the kitchen, but providers of 24-hour care to individuals with developmental disabilities, mental retardation, mental illness or substance abuse issues were especially hard hit. For those facilities, cooking equipment was the origin of their fires 74% of the time.<sup>1</sup>

As a human services provider, you need to be especially vigilant when considering the potential for a kitchen fire that could spread to the rest of your facility. Have your food services manager complete the checklist below to help ensure that your staff is taking proper precautions.

## Check *all* the boxes to help reduce the likelihood of a kitchen fire in your facility.

- Keep things that can catch fire away from your stovetop
- Never leave the kitchen when frying, grilling or broiling food
- If you are baking or roasting food, check it regularly and use a timer
- To help prevent burns, use pot holders or oven mitts to pick up hot pots and pans
- Wear short, close-fitting or tightly rolled sleeves when cooking; loose sleeves can catch fire easily or snag on a pot handle
- Keep all pan handles turned so they don't stick out and get knocked over by passersby
- Keep the kitchen's stovetop and oven clean; food or grease residues can easily catch fire
- Do not overheat cooking oils, as a grease fire can develop when oil becomes too hot
- Keep a Class K fire extinguisher nearby; do not use water on a grease fire; if a fire burns out of control, exit the building and call 911
- In case of a small pan fire, turn off the burner, put on an oven mitt and slide a pan lid over the pan



Providing solutions  
to help our members  
manage risk.<sup>SM</sup>

For your risk management and safety needs, contact Nationwide Loss Control Services: 1-866-808-2101 or [LCS@nationwide.com](mailto:LCS@nationwide.com).

<sup>1</sup> *Fires in Health Care Facilities*, National Fire Protection Association, Marty Ahrens (April 2013), pp. 1 and 4.