Recipes for Kitchen Safety (Checklist)

Serve up safety by taking the time to follow these recipes to reduce the risk of an electrical fire.

**Appliances**

Are any appliances plugged into extension cords on a permanent basis?

- **YES.** Have a licensed electrician install new outlets where needed or move equipment closer to an outlet.
- **NO.**

*Extension cords are designed for temporary use only. Extended use may damage the cord, creating a fire and shock hazard.*

Are all appliance cords placed so they will not come in contact with hot surfaces?

- **NO.** Move cords away from all heat sources, such as a range or toaster.
- **YES.**

*Cords can melt or burn from excess heat. This can expose wires and lead to a fire or electric shock.*

Is any cord cracked, frayed, or otherwise damaged?

- **YES.** Do not use damaged cords. Have a licensed electrician replace the cord or replace the equipment.
- **NO.**

*Damaged cords may have exposed wires that can be a fire and shock hazard.*

Are cords attached to anything with nails or staples?

- **YES.** Remove nails or staples. Check cord and replace if damaged.
- **NO.**

*Nails and staples can cut or pinch insulation or break wire strands, presenting a fire or shock hazard.*

Are cords kept wrapped up while being used?

- **YES.** Unwrap cords.
- **NO.**

*Wrapped cords trap heat, which can lead to melting or weakening of the insulation.*

Have any of your appliances been recalled by the manufacturer?

- **NO.**

*The CPSC website also provides information about what remedy is being offered by the manufacturer for recalled products, such as a refund or a repair.*
Smoke Alarms

Are any countertop appliances located near the sink?

- **NO.**
- **YES.** Relocate the appliance to an outlet further away from the sink to prevent contact with water.

Do not use electrical appliances that have been wet. Electrical equipment exposed to water can be extremely dangerous.

Are all countertop appliances unplugged when not in use?

- **NO.** Unplug all countertop appliances after use.
- **YES.**

Even when turned off, plugged-in electrical appliances may pose a shock hazard if they come into contact with water. Or a worn switch may turn on with no one touching it.

Are all appliance surfaces that are exposed to heat clean of dirt and food residue?

- **NO.** Depending on use, develop a cleaning schedule to be sure appliances do not accumulate potentially flammable byproducts.
- **YES.**

Overflowed or splattered food in and around appliances could ignite if not cleaned prior to the next use.

Do you have the correct number of smoke alarms?

- **NO or I DON’T KNOW.** Install smoke alarms on each level of the home, outside each sleeping area, and inside each bedroom.
- **YES.**

Smoke alarms save lives. Nearly two-thirds of home fire deaths occur in homes without working smoke alarms.

Do you test them every month?

- **NO.** Test smoke alarms every month by pressing the TEST button.
- **YES.**

Smoke alarms can stop working without showing signs of failure, so regular testing is necessary to ensure they are working properly.

Have you changed the batteries this year?

- **NO.** Replace batteries at least once a year or sooner if they begin to “chirp.”
- **YES.**

Without sufficient power, the smoke alarm will not sound.
Are your smoke alarms less than 10 years old?

- **NO or I DON’T KNOW.** Replace all smoke alarms at least every 10 years.
- **YES.**

The components inside smoke alarms can wear out over time, which could affect their operation.

Do you have Arc Fault Circuit Interrupters (AFCIs)?

- **NO or I DON’T KNOW.** Consider having a licensed electrician replace the standard circuit breakers with AFCIs.
- **YES.**

AFCIs are advanced circuit breakers that provide greater electrical fire protection.

If AFCIs are installed, do you test them every month?

- **NO.** Test AFCIs each month using the TEST button. If defective, have it replaced by a licensed electrician.
- **YES.**

AFCIs can stop working without showing signs of failure, so regular testing is necessary to ensure they are working properly.

Do your kitchen outlets have Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters (GFCIs)?

- **NO or I DON’T KNOW.** Consider having a licensed electrician install GFCIs in all kitchen outlets.
- **YES.**

GFCIs provide protection from electric shock in areas where electricity and water are in close proximity.

If already installed, do you test GFCIs every month?

- **NO.** Test GFCIs each month by pushing the RESET button. Then plug in a light and turn it on. Next press the TEST button. The light should turn off. If the light did not turn off after pressing TEST it is defective, and should be replaced by a licensed electrician. (Remember to press reset after testing.)
- **YES.**

GFCIs do not show visible or audible signs of failure unless specific tested. So be proactive in ensuring you and your loved ones’ safety.