

KITCHEN

In the kitchen, check the range area, all electrical cords, lighting, stools, all throw rugs and mats, and the telephone area.

Are towels, curtains, and other things that might catch fire located away from the range?

Placing or storing non-cooking equipment like potholders, dish towels, or plastic utensils on or near the range may result in fires or burns.

YES NO

- Store flammable and combustible items away from range and oven.
- Remove any towels hanging on oven handles. If towels hang close to a burner, change the location of the towel rack.
- If necessary, shorten or remove curtains which could brush against heat sources.

Does your loved one wear clothing with short or close-fitting sleeves while they are cooking?

Long sleeves are more likely to catch fire than are short sleeves. Long sleeves are also more apt to catch on pot handles, overturning pots and pans and causing scalds.

YES NO

- Roll back long, loose sleeves or fasten them with pins or elastic bands while cooking.

Are kitchen ventilation systems or range exhausts functioning properly and are they in use while cooking?

Indoor air pollutants may accumulate to unhealthy levels in a kitchen where gas or kerosene-fire appliances are in use.

YES NO

- Use ventilation systems or open windows to clear air of vapors and smoke.

Are all extension cords and appliance cords located away from the sink or range areas?

Electrical appliances and power cords can cause shock or electrocution if they come in contact with water. Cords can also be damaged by excess heat.

YES NO

- Move cords and appliances away from sink areas and hot surfaces.
- Move appliances closer to wall outlets or to different outlets so extension cords won't be needed.
- If extension cords must be used, install wiring guides so that cords will not hang near sink, range, or working areas.
- Consider adding new outlets for convenience and safety; ask an electrician to install outlets equipped with ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) to protect against electric shock. A GFCI is a shock-protection device that will detect electrical fault and shut off electricity before serious injury or death occurs.

Does good, even lighting exist over the stove, sink, and countertop work areas, especially where food is sliced or cut?

Low lighting and glare can contribute to burns or cuts. Improve lighting by:

YES NO

- Opening curtains and blinds (unless this causes too much glare).
- Using the maximum wattage bulb allowed by the fixture (If you do not know the correct wattage for the fixture, use a bulb no larger than 60 watts).
- Reducing glare by using frosted bulbs, indirect lighting, shades or globes on light fixtures, or partially closing the blinds or curtains.
- Installing additional light fixtures, e.g., under cabinet/over countertop lighting.

Does the kitchen have a step stool that is stable and in good repair?

Standing on chairs, boxes, or other makeshift items to reach high shelves can result in falls.

YES NO

- If your loved one doesn't have a step stool, consider buying one. Choose one with a handrail they can hold onto while standing on the top step.
- Before climbing on any step stool, make sure it is fully opened and stable.
- Tighten screws and braces on the step stool.
- Discard step stools with broken parts.

Have any of the foods in the refrigerator or freezer become outdated?

Outdated foods can cause food poisoning. While this can be very uncomfortable for younger and middle age people, it can be much more serious for frail elderly persons, sometimes even requiring hospitalization.

YES NO

- Periodically go through everything in the refrigerator and freezer and throw away all outdated foods.