



Hot Ideas: How to Get Cooking Safety Messages Out to Your Community

YOUR NEIGHBORS ARE YOUR BEST RESOURCES in helping spread the message about cooking safely. Here are some ways to get the word out in your community:

- **Hold an Open House:** Give residents a chance to see the firehouse up close while you provide valuable public education about cooking safety. Consider setting up a mock kitchen to demonstrate correct and incorrect cooking-related behaviors. Invite community members to participate in the demonstration.
- **Involve your Audience:** Interactive demonstrations are a great way to get the public's attention. Consider partnering with supermarkets, restaurants, appliance dealers or other high-traffic businesses for maximum exposure.
- **Stop the Presses:** Local media can give your event a lot of free publicity. Use the sample editorials and letters to the editor in this kit to give local media the facts on cooking safety.
- **Cable Access:** Contact your local cable station to propose a segment on cooking safety and cooking equipment fires.
- **Dan Doofus:** Introduce Dan's latest PSA, "Kitchen Double Trouble," to your community. Use the PSA on local cable stations, during a station open house, at a safety booth in a mall or supermarket, or at local hospitals and medical offices.
- **Local Chef:** Invite a local chef, or a fire fighter who is a great cook, to prepare a special meal. Include cooking safety tips as part of the presentation.
- **Fire House Cookbook:** Bring together firefighter favorite recipes with cooking safety tips in a cookbook or newsletter for residents.
- **Fire House Barbecue:** Contact a local grocery store for food donations. Light up the grill and have a neighborhood barbecue. Use the opportunity to teach residents about safe grilling.



Event Planning Tips

- **Target Your Audience:** Decide what you want to achieve at your event and who your target audience is. Make sure your activities reinforce cooking safety messages and provide useful information on how to prevent fires and burns.
- **Pick a Date and Location:** Hold your event at a time when people in your community are available. Saturday and Sunday afternoons are often most convenient. However, check the community calendar to make sure there are minimal conflicts. The firehouse is always a fun location for the public. Other places that draw crowds are grocery stores, the public library, and community centers.
- **Have Materials Ready:** Have handouts and other take-home items available for all age groups. Distribute printed materials that reinforce cooking safety. Check out NFPA's on-line catalog www.nfpacatalog.org for brochures to handout in your community.
- **Feed Them:** Arrange for a local grocer or restaurant to sponsor your event and provide refreshments. Have firefighters cook up their favorite specialties, perhaps as part of the safety demonstration, or request donations of baked goods.
- **Promote, Promote, Promote:** No matter how great your event is, it won't be a success if no one knows about it! Publicize your open house at each and every opportunity, and as far in advance as possible. Use the cooking safety "fill-in-the-blank" news release to promote your event to local media outlets. Develop and pass out flyers to local businesses and schools. Send letters to civic and religious groups that can announce your event. Most importantly, be creative and use your resources to your full advantage.