



***Eddie Treviño, Jr.***  
***County Judge***

**For Immediate Release**

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Cameron County Judge

**HOLIDAY & WINTER WEATHER SAFETY TIPS**

During the holidays, with our family, friends, and those who mean the most to us, it is important that we remain aware of critical safety tips and measures to remain safe and prepared in light of winter weather conditions or possible hazards.

The following heating safety tips and precautions can prevent a serious incident and household fire.

**Please make sure to:**

- Test all smoke alarms at least once a month,
- Keep anything that can burn at least three-feet away from heating equipment (such as a fireplace, wood stove, or portable space heater),
- Establish a safety kid-free zone around all open fires and space heaters,
- Never use your own oven to heat your home,
- Have a qualified professional install heating equipment (to include water heaters, central heating equipment) according to local codes,
- Have heating equipment and chimneys cleaned and inspected by a qualified professional,
- Remember to turn portable heaters off when leaving the room or going to bed,
- Always use the specified fuel by the manufacture for fuel burning space heaters, and
- Make sure that your fireplace has a sturdy screen to stop sparks from flying.

**Please remember to never use a generator, charcoal grill, gasoline or propane heater, or camp stove indoors to keep warm.**

It is extremely important to install and maintain carbon monoxide (CO) alarms to avoid the risk of CO poisoning. Current alarms employ different types of technology including multi-sensing, which could include smoke and carbon monoxide combined. People who are hard-of-hearing or deaf can use special alarms. These alarms have strobe lights and bed shakers.

**All smoke alarms should be installed:**

- Inside every sleeping room,
- Outside each separate sleeping area and on every level, and
- Need to be replaced every 10 years.

Every day and throughout the holidays and upcoming festivities, cooking brings family and friends together and provides an outlet for creativity and time spent together. Please remember to cook with caution and avoid this number one cause of home fires.

When cooking, cook with caution and:

- Be on alert,
- Stay in the kitchen while you are frying, boiling, grilling or broiling food and turn off the stove when leaving even if its for a short period of time,
- Use a timer to remind you that you are cooking, and
- Keep anything that can catch fire (including oven mitts, wooden utensils, food packaging, towels or curtains) away from your stovetop.

This Thanksgiving, and if deep-frying a turkey, a great cooking safety tip and to avoid a hazardous oil spill is to:

- First, put the turkey in the pot and fill with water,
- Next, remove the turkey from the pot and see and remember where the liquid line is (this will help you see how much oil is needed when ready to cook),
- At all times remember the turkey has to be completely defrosted and pat-dried, before submerging in oil, and
- Always use precaution.

**The leading cause of fires in the kitchen is unattended cooking. When there's a fire and when in doubt, remember to just get out! Call 911 from outside your home.**

Please contact the Cameron County Judge's Office of Emergency Management and Fire Marshal Service should you have any safety questions or concerns regarding your home at (956) 982-5464. Visit <https://www.cameroncountytexas.gov/cameron-county-fire-marshal-service/> for more information and printable flyers.

**Warming shelters readily available are:**

- **Ozanam Center:** 656 N. Minnesota Ave., Brownsville, TX 78521
- **Loaves and Fishes:** 514 E. St., Harlingen, TX 78550

“The holidays are very special moments where family and friends gather to continue making memories, and with the stated safety tips and guidelines we want to make sure you are safe. Rest assure that we will continue to work across all levels of communication should an emergency situation arise and will keep you informed with the most up-to-date information. Please remain vigilant of any updates in the city where you reside, and contact us should you have any questions or concerns. Please continue to take care of yourselves and each other during the holidays,” stated Cameron County Judge Eddie Treviño, Jr.

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