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Recent tragedy reinforces need for safer cooking practices

Big White Fire Department is urging residents to undertake safer cooking practices after a recent fatal fire in Toronto on March 28th that claimed the life of one child and left five other family members injured, some critically. The Office of the Fire Marshal and Emergency Management (OFMEM) has confirmed that the cause of the fire was accidental, as a result of unattended cooking.

“Safer cooking needs must be practiced throughout the year to prevent injuries and fatalities,” says Chris Daley, Fire Prevention officer to the Big White Fire Department. “Residents should stay in the kitchen to keep an eye on their cooking.”

Provincial statistics indicate that unattended cooking is the leading source of ignition in home fires and the second leading source in fatal fires. Safe cooking practices can prevent many of these fires.

Important steps to prevent cooking fires include:

- **Stay in the kitchen while you cook, particularly if you are using oil or high temperatures.**
- **Keep combustible items such as cooking utensils and paper towels, a safe distance from your stove, they can easily ignite if they are too close to a burner.**
- **Keep a proper-fitting lid near the stove when cooking, if a pot catches fire, slide the lid over the pot and turn off the stove.**
- **Drink responsibly and keep an eye on those who do not. Excessive alcohol use is a contributing factor in many residential fires.**
- **Ensure that children are not left unattended while cooking.**

For more information contact:

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