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News Release

For Immediate Release

Fire crews respond to three cooking fires in one night

Three cooking fires in less than an hour and a half - all in apartment buildings - kept Springfield firefighters busy Wednesday night. The first occurred around 7 p.m. A tenant was heating oil on the stove when it caught on fire. She then threw water on it, causing the fire to spread, and ran out of the apartment. Fortunately, sprinklers in the apartment extinguished the fire. Seventeen minutes later, another fire was reported at a Springfield apartment complex. A tenant was also heating oil on the stove when it caught fire. Although it's not recommended to use water on a grease fire, he was able to extinguish the fire using water from the sink. About an hour later, firefighters were called to a third cooking fire. This one turned out to be a cooking fire in a microwave. Fortunately, all three turned out to be relatively minor fires, but the common cause highlights the importance of taking precautions while cooking.

- Always stay in the kitchen while cooking on the stove
- Never leave home while using the oven.
- Be sure to use a timer while cooking.
- Keep children and pets out of the kitchen while cooking.
- Keep anything that can burn (oven mits, paper towels, food packaging, etc.) away from the stove and other heat sources.
- In case of a grease fire that is small and contained pan, put a tight fitting lid over top, turn off the heat and evacuate the building.
- In the case of an oven or microwave fire, keep the door closed, turn off or unplug if possible and evacuate the building.

The Springfield Fire Department also encourages occupants of all rental properties to know where the closest fire extinguisher is and learn how to use it. All rental properties are required to be equipped with fire extinguishers. Knowing how to use it could save a life. For training opportunities, contact the Springfield Fire Department at 417-864-1500.

Springfield firefighters will visit each of these apartment complexes at their earliest convenience, to deliver information about how to prevent future apartment fires.

For media only: For more information, contact Fire and Life Safety Educator Cara Erwin at 417-864-1699 or for a faster response, e-mail cerwin@springfieldmo.gov.