BYRON FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

THANKSGIVING TURKEY SAFETY GUIDE

Wishes Everyone a Safe & Happy Thanksgiving!

1. SAFE THAWING (NEVER ON THE COUNTER!)

- **Refrigerator Method:** Allow 24 hours of thawing time for every 4 to 5 pounds of turkey. Keep it on a tray on the bottom shelf to avoid raw juice drips.
- **Cold Water Method:** Submerge wrapped turkey in cold tap water. Change water every 30 minutes. Cook immediately once completely thawed.

2. KITCHEN HYGIENE & PREP

- **Do NOT Wash the Turkey:** Rinsing raw poultry splashes bacteria up to 3 feet onto counters, utensils, and surrounding food. Cooking is the only way to destroy bacteria.
- **Wash Hands Frequently:** Scrub with warm soap and water for 20 seconds before and after handling raw meat.
- **Sanitize Surfaces:** Thoroughly bleach or sanitize cutting boards, counters, and utensils after raw poultry exposure.

3. SAFE COOKING TEMPERATURES

- **Minimum Oven Temp:** Always set your kitchen oven to at least **325°F**.
- **The 165°F Rule:** Ensure the turkey reaches **165°F** in the thickest part of the breast, innermost thigh, and innermost wing. Check all three areas with a food thermometer.
- **Stuffing Safety:** Cook stuffing separately in a casserole dish for optimal fire and health safety. If inside the bird, the center of the stuffing must also read 165°F.

4. TURKEY FRYER PRECAUTIONS (HIGH FIRE RISK!)

- **Outdoors Only:** Operate fryers at least 10 feet away from your home, garage, or wooden decks. Never leave the hot oil unattended.
- **100% Thawed & Dry:** Dropping a frozen or damp turkey into boiling oil causes a violent, explosive overflow fire. Pat the bird completely dry inside and out.
- **Watch Oil Level:** Test displacement with water beforehand so oil doesn't spill onto the open burner flame when lowering the turkey.

5. HANDLING HOLIDAY LEFTOVERS

- **The 2-Hour Window:** Refrigerate or freeze all perishable items and turkey meat within 2 hours of carving to prevent rapid bacterial growth.
- **Shallow Storage:** Carve meat off the bone and store in small, shallow containers so it cools down to safe temperatures quickly.

In Case of an Emergency, Dial 911 Immediately. Stay Safe, Byron!