

Keeping Minnesota *Ready*



HOME HEATING SAFETY TIPS

Death and injury can be reduced with proper understanding and safe use of heating equipment. Safety should be your first consideration when heating your home. Remember these safety guidelines and tips:

PORTABLE AND SPACE HEATERS

Portable heaters come in many shapes and sizes and use a variety of fuels or power sources. When purchasing or using a space or portable heater, make sure it carries a UL or FM label and is approved for the use you intended.

- Place any portable heating device at least three feet away from anything combustible, including paper, drapery, bedding and clothing.
- Space heaters need constant watching and should always be turned off when you leave your home and before bedtime.
- Drying mittens or other combustibles over a space or portable heater is a fire danger.
- Make sure all cords on electric heaters are in good shape and checked periodically for any frays or breaks in the insulation surrounding the wires.
- Check the cord and outlet occasionally for overheating; if it feels hot, turn it off.

LIQUID-FUELED AND GAS-BURNING HEATERS

- Any heating appliance with an open flame needs to be vented to the outside to eliminate the possibility of carbon monoxide poisoning.
- When using these types of heating devices, manufacturers' instructions and recommendations should be followed faithfully.
- Units must be cooled before refueling; this should take place outside of the structure. Fuel must be stored in a container approved by the fire department and clearly marked with the fuel name.

WOOD STOVES

- Follow manufacturers' recommendations for proper installation, use and maintenance.
- Make sure the stove is properly ventilated. Other household venting appliances can diminish proper venting of your wood stove. Test all other appliances (bathroom fans, stovetop venting, HVAC units, etc.) to ensure that they don't interfere with proper stove venting.
- Maintain clearances around stoves, flue pipes, and floors according to manufacturers' recommendations.
- Check all connections at the beginning of the heating season.
- If you have questions about fire protection devices, contact your local fire department.

FIREPLACES AND WOOD BURNING STOVES

Preventive:

- Chimneys need to be inspected by a professional sweep prior to the start of each heating season and periodically throughout the year
- Have chimneys cleaned if there is a buildup of creosote. Creosote is a chemical substance that forms when wood burns and builds up on the chimney wall. It is highly combustible.

Active:

- Fireplace screens should be firmly in place when you burn fires.
- Burn only clean, well-seasoned, dry firewood in the fireplace.
- Make sure home smoke detectors are installed and working.



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