

WINTER FIRE SAFETY INFORMATION

Facts

- Cooking continues to be the number-one cause of home fires; 49 percent of residential fires originated in the kitchen.
- Open flames and heating fires were numbers two and three.
- Most heating fires involve fireplaces or chimneys.
- The most dangerous place to be, with regard to fire, is in your own home. Three-quarters of fire deaths take place in personal residences.
- In 2006, 43 percent of home fire deaths took place in homes without working smoke detectors.

Safe Behavior

Your home can be a cozy, warm place to spend the winter, but it can become a nightmare if you don't "watch what you heat!"

- Safety around heating equipment and appliances is an important first step in reducing the threat of fire. Keep children and loose clothing at a safe distance.
- Use a yardstick to measure the distance between heating equipment and combustible material. Unless you have three feet of clearance, you are at risk.
- Always turn off portable heating appliances when leaving home or retiring for the evening. Be sure the fire in the fireplace is out before going to bed.
- Have chimneys, fireplaces and other heating devices inspected by a qualified professional at the start of every heating season.
- Use a sturdy screen or glass closure in front of your fireplace, and burn only clean fireplace wood. Never burn treated lumber.
- Install smoke/fire alarms on every level of your home, including the basement, in each bedroom, in the hallway outside each sleeping area, and test them monthly.
- If you smell gas in your home, contact your local utility company or qualified professional heating contractor and follow their advice.
- Install a residential fire sprinkler system in your home.
- Inspect heat tape before using it. Never thaw frozen pipes with an open flame.