



Heating Safety Talking Points

Priority Messages

- Keep or maintain a three-foot (one-meter) clearance between all heating equipment and anything that can burn.
- Do not use your oven to heat your home.
- Inspect and maintain heating equipment regularly for safety.
- Portable space heaters should be turned off every time you leave the room and before going to bed.
- When buying a new space heater, make sure it has the label showing it is listed by a recognized testing laboratory. Be sure to have fixed space heaters installed by a qualified technician, according to manufacturer's instructions or applicable codes. Or make sure a qualified technician checks to see that the unit has been properly installed.
- Make sure your fireplace has a sturdy screen to prevent sparks from flying into the room. Allow fireplace and woodstove ashes to cool before disposing in a metal container.
- Have heating equipment and chimneys inspected and cleaned every year.
- Install smoke alarms in every bedroom, outside each sleeping area and on every level of the home. For the best protection, interconnect all smoke alarms throughout the home. When one sounds, they all sound. Test smoke alarms monthly.
- Install and maintain carbon monoxide alarms to avoid risk of carbon monoxide poisoning.

Additional Safety Tips

Heating

- Make sure your choice of heating equipment is permitted by law in your community. For example, kerosene heaters, chimineas and firepits are not allowed in all communities.
- Make sure your heating equipment has the label showing that it is listed by a recognized testing laboratory.
- Install stationary space heating equipment, water heaters or central heating equipment according to the local codes and manufacturer's instructions.
 - If possible, have a qualified professional install the equipment.
 - Make sure all fuel-burning equipment is vented to the outside. Make sure the venting for exhaust is kept clear and unobstructed. This includes removal of snow around the outlet to the outside.

- Supervise children when open fires and space heaters are being used and install a non-combustible screen around the appliance to prevent burns which are even more common than fire injuries.
- For fuel assistance, contact the National Fuel Funds Network at 1-202-824-0660. Contact local officials to find out if local weatherization programs are available in the community.

Portable Space Heaters

- Plug power cords only into outlets with sufficient capacity and never into an extension cord.
- Inspect for cracked, frayed, or broken plugs or loose connections. Replace before using.

Open-air Burning

- Call the local fire department or municipality before outdoor or open-air burning. This includes campfires, brush fires, firepits, chimneys and outdoor fireplaces.
- Closely attend all outdoor fires.
- Use chimineas, outdoor fireplaces and firepits outdoors only and at least 10 feet away from the home or anything that can burn.

Fuel Burning Space Heaters

- Always use the proper fuel as specified by the manufacturer.
- When refueling, allow the appliance to cool and refuel outside or in a well-ventilated area.
- When using the heater, open a window to ensure adequate venting.

Wood-burning Stoves and Fireplaces

- Burn only dry, well-seasoned wood.
- Use artificial logs according to manufacturer's recommendations.
- Use only newspaper and kindling wood to start a fire. Never use flammable liquids, such as lighter fluid, kerosene or gasoline to start a fire.

