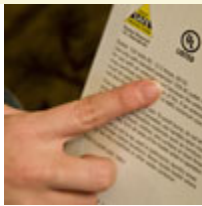


Home Heating Safety

Heating equipment, especially portable and space heaters, fireplaces and wood stoves, require careful use and proper maintenance. The Home Safety Council and the Spring Lake Park-Blaine-Mounds View Fire Department offers the following tips to help families prevent fire and burn-related injuries during the winter months.

Portable Space Heaters



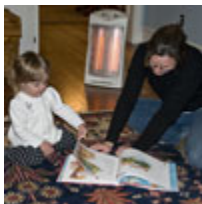
- Make sure your heater has been tested for safety. Look on the bottom for a label such as ETL, UL or CSA.



- Space heaters need to have plenty of space around them.



- Place space heaters at least three feet away from anything that can burn - including furniture, people, pets and curtains.



- There should always be an adult in the room when a space heater is on. Turn off space heaters before leaving a room or going to sleep.



- Supervise children and pets at all times when a portable space heater is in use.
- Never use space heaters to dry clothing or blankets.

Fireplaces and Wood Stoves



- Burn only seasoned hardwood like oak, ash or maple. Do not burn trash, cardboard boxes or Christmas trees because these items burn unevenly, may contain poisons or cause a home fire.



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- Have a professional chimney sweep inspect chimneys every year. They will fix any cracks, blockages and leaks and clean out any build-up in the chimney that could start a fire.
- Creosote logs can be used to help reduce the build-up of creosote in fireplaces. Check labels to make sure the log has been tested and approved by UL. Even if you use creosote logs, fireplaces should still be inspected by a professional each year.



- Open flues before fireplaces are used.



- Use sturdy screens or glass doors to keep embers inside fireplaces.



- Install at least one smoke alarm on every level of your home and inside and near sleeping areas.



- Keep young children away from working wood stoves and heaters to avoid contact burn injuries.

Carbon Monoxide (CO) Poisoning Precautions:

Carbon monoxide is known as “the silent killer.” You cannot see it, smell it or taste it. CO claims the lives of nearly 300 people in their homes each year according to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC). CO is a deadly gas that is produced by fuel-burning heating equipment, such as furnaces, wood stoves, fireplaces, and kerosene heaters. Follow these guidelines to help keep your family safer.



- Install at least one digital CO alarm near sleeping areas within 10 feet of bedrooms.



- Have a trained professional inspect, clean and tune-up your home's central heating system and repair leaks or other problems. Fireplaces and woodstoves should also be inspected each year and cleaned or repaired as needed.



- Keep gas appliances properly adjusted and serviced.



- Never use an oven or range to heat your home.



- Never use a gas or charcoal grill inside your home or in a closed garage.



- Portable electric generators must be used outside only. Never use them indoors, in a garage or in any confined area that can allow CO to collect. Follow usage directions closely.