

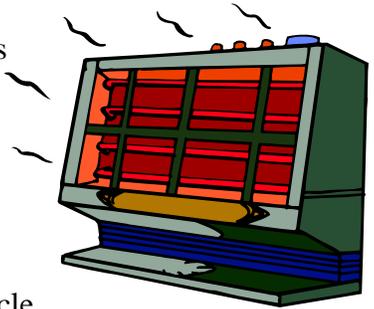
## Heating Equipment Fire Safety: Facts You Should Know

The high cost of home heating fuels and utilities has caused many people to search for alternate sources of heating. The use of wood burning stoves is growing and space heaters are selling rapidly, or coming out of storage. Fireplaces are burning wood and man-made logs. While these are all acceptable heating methods, these uses are major contributing factors in residential fires.

Heating equipment fires increase during the fall and continue the increase through winter, with roughly one half of home heating fires and home heating fire deaths occurring between November and March. Fixed and portable space heaters, including wood stoves, are involved in 74% of fire-related deaths. The good news is that these types of fires can be prevented through proper maintenance and use of heating equipment.

To help keep you and your family safe, follow these simple steps when using home heating equipment:

- Place space heaters on a level, hard, and nonflammable surface such as ceramic tile floor, NOT on rugs or carpets or near bedding or drapes. Keep the heater at least three feet from bedding, drapes, furniture, and other flammable materials.
  - WHEN USING A SPACE HEATER:
    - Any space heater should be UL approved and labeled accordingly
    - Space heater should be plugged directly into a wall receptacle
    - Space heaters should be kept in good working condition with no frayed or damaged cords, missing or damaged guards or controls.
- Keep children and pets away from space heaters.
- Make sure wood stoves are properly installed, away from combustible surfaces, have the proper floor support, and adequate ventilation.
- Never leave space heaters or fireplaces unattended. Turn off space heaters and make sure any embers in the fireplace are extinguished before going to bed or leaving the room.
- Make sure your space heaters have an emergency tip-over shutoff in case they tip over. Never refill a fuel-powered space heater while it is operating and still hot. Refuel outside, away from the house.



- Use a glass or metal screen in front of your fireplace to prevent sparks igniting nearby carpets or furniture.
- Do not use portable propane space heater indoors or in any confined space unless they are specifically designed for indoor use.
- Have wood and coal stoves, fireplaces, chimneys, and furnaces professionally inspected and cleaned once a year.
- NEVER use electric or gas ranges or charcoal grills to heat your home. They are not intended for that purpose and can cause fires and carbon monoxide poisoning and death.