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FIRE DEPARTMENT
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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 3 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 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.

Units must be cooled before refueling; this should take place outside of the structure. Fuel must be stored in a container made for the product and clearly marked with the fuel name.

Follow all manufacturer's instructions and recommendations faithfully.

Fireplaces and Wood Stoves

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 in the chimney wall. It is highly combustible.

Note:

Fireplace screens should be firmly in place when you burn fires.

Burn only clean, well-seasoned, dry firewood in the fire place.

Test your smoke detectors to make sure they activate.

Candle Safety

Choose flameless candles. Most offer the same flicker effect as real candles and come in scented varieties.

Keep traditional candles in a sturdy container that cannot be tipped over.

Extinguish candles before leaving the room or going to sleep.

Use flashlights – not candles – for emergency lighting if the power goes out.

Christmas Tree Safety

Never block an exit with a Christmas tree.

Only use non-flammable decorations.

Keep trees away from heat vents and other heat sources.

Remove the tree from your home when the needles are brittle or begin to fall off.

Pick a tree stand that could hold the tree securely. The stand should hold enough water for two days.

Generator Safety

ALWAYS place the generator outdoors. NEVER use a generator inside homes, garages, crawlspaces, sheds, or similar areas, even if you're using fans or opening doors and windows for ventilation. Deadly levels of carbon monoxide can quickly build up in these areas and can linger for hours, even after the generator has shut off.

Additionally, place generators so that carbon monoxide fumes can't enter the home through windows, doors, vents, or other openings in the building, says the National Fire Protection Association.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that a generator should be placed no closer than 15 feet from a structure.

Install carbon monoxide alarms in your home — either battery-operated alarms or plug-in alarms with battery backup.

Turn off generators and let them cool down before refueling. Never refuel a generator while it is hot.

Be familiar with the signs for carbon monoxide poisoning — nausea, dizziness, headache, confusion, sleepiness, and weakness — and if you or others in your home experience these symptoms, or if your carbon monoxide alarms sound, get to fresh air immediately. Do not delay. The “silent killer” can rapidly have devastating consequences. Don’t go back into the building until trained and properly equipped emergency personnel have determined it to be safe and free of dangerous fumes.

Portable generators are a useful and valuable tool when electrical service is interrupted. The key is take extreme care in operating them safely.