



Home Heating Safety

According to the NFPA, home heating equipment is a leading cause of house fires. Often in the fall and winter months we receive calls for fires that have been caused by such things as items too close to a woodstove, chimney fires, and improper storage of ashes. Here are some simple tips that can help prevent fires caused by heating equipment:

- Keep anything that can burn at least three feet away from heating equipment, like the furnace, fireplace, wood stove, or portable space heater.
- Have a three-foot “kid-free zone” around open fires and space heaters.
- Never use your oven to heat your home.
- Have a qualified professional install stationary space heating equipment, water heaters or central heating equipment according to the manufacturer’s instructions.
- Have heating equipment and chimneys cleaned and inspected every year by a qualified professional.
- Remember to turn portable heaters off when leaving the room or going to bed.
- Always use the right kind of fuel, specified by the manufacturer, for fuel burning space heaters.
- Only burn clean, seasoned wood to help prevent creosote build-up. Never burn garbage in a woodstove.

- Ashes can contain live coals, so let them cool completely in a metal container before you throw them out. Never put ashes in a green compost cart unless you are absolutely sure they have no live coals.
- Test smoke alarms monthly.
- Install wood burning stoves following manufacturer's instructions or have a professional do the installation.
- All fuel-burning equipment should be vented to the outside to avoid carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning. Install and maintain CO alarms to avoid the risk of CO poisoning.