



WINTER HEATING SAFETY



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Roanoke County Fire & Rescue and the National Fire Protection Association

HEATING

In 2007, heating equipment was involved in an estimated 66,400 reported U.S. home structure fires, with associated losses of 580 civilian deaths, 1,850 civilian injuries, and \$608 million in direct property damage. These fires accounted for 17% of all reported home fires.

Facts & figures

Based on 2003-2007 annual averages:

- Space heaters, whether portable or stationary, accounted for one-third (32%) of home heating fires and over three-fourths (79%) of home heating fire deaths.
- The leading factor contributing to home heating fires (25%) was failure to clean, principally creosote from solid-fueled heating equipment, primarily chimneys.
- Placing things that can burn too close to heating equipment or placing heating equipment too close to things that can burn, such as upholstered furniture, clothing, mattress, or bedding, was the leading factor contributing to ignition in fatal home heating fires and accounted for close to half (46%) of home heating fire deaths.
- Half (49%) of all home heating fires occurred in December, January and February.



HEATING SAFETY TIPS

Heating equipment is a leading cause of home fire deaths. Almost half of home heating equipment fires are reported during the months of December, January, and February. Some simple steps can prevent most heating-related fires from happening.

Safety tips

- 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 local codes and 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.
- Make sure the fireplace has a sturdy screen to stop sparks from flying into the room. Ashes should be cool before putting them in a metal container. Keep the container a safe distance away from your home.
- Test smoke alarms monthly.

NFPA Link for the Heating Safety :

http://www.nfpa.org/assets/files//PDF/Public%20Education/Heating_Safety.pdf