Burn Prevention: Heating Safety

There is something about the winter months – even in Florida – and curling up with a good book by the fireplace. But did you know that heating equipment is one of the leading causes of home fire deaths? With a few simple safety tips and precautions, you can prevent most heating fires from happening.

Heating Equipment Smarts

- 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. If you smell gas in your gas heater, do not light the appliance. Leave the home immediately and call your local fire department or gas company.

Stay Warm and Safe This Winter!

- Keep anything that can burn at least 3 feet away from heating equipment, such as a furnace, fireplace, wood stove or portable space heater.

- Have a 3-foot "kid-free zone" around open fires and space heaters.

- Never use your oven to heat your home.

- Have a qualified professional install stationary 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.

Fast Fact
Half of home heating fires are reported during the months of December, January and February.

Source: nfpa.org/education

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