



IMPORTANT FIRE SAFETY TIPS FOR THE SEASON

Recently, there have been many residential fires that have destroyed homes and disrupted many families. There are many various causes for these fires, space heating and careless smoking to name only 2. All residents need to take heed to fire safety measures to help prevent further accidents. With temperatures dipping sometimes to extremes, residents often discount simple practices that can make a life-saving difference. The use of space heaters to supplement normal home heating methods or to solve a freezing issue with water pipes rises during these extreme temperature dips.

If there is a need to use these devices the following safety tips should be followed:

- Use heaters on the floor. Do not place them on furniture, which could create a trip/fall hazard.
- Do not use heaters in wet or moist places such as bathrooms.
- Do not use extension cords or run the cords under carpets or rugs.
- Use only UL listed heating appliances that include tip over switches that shut the heater off if it is tipped over.
- Do not place heaters within 5 ft. of bedding, clothing, drapes etc. Do not use heaters to dry wet clothes or in an area where clothing or other objects can fall on the heater.
- Discard all smoking material properly in metal containers whenever possible and never toss smoking material onto the ground.
- Never smoke while sleeping or even if you are resting or relaxing.
- If possible, purchase the self-extinguishing type of smoking products which are required to be marked as such.

Many folks don't think much about the need for fire safety until it is too late. We all move on with our days, our lives, believing we know what to do should a fire occur. Things such as stop, drop and roll are often mentioned when asked about fire safety. We all have heard it as children but there are things you can do to prevent even getting to that point and it's important that they are highlighted as well.

- Ensure that working smoke and carbon monoxide alarms are present in your home or apartment. It is recommended to have an alarm on each level as well as outside sleeping areas and bedrooms.
- Test smoke and carbon monoxide alarms at least once a month. Change batteries if necessary.
- Establish an escape plan should a fire occur and make sure everyone in your household knows exactly what to do including babysitters and guests.
- Practice that plan and be aware of you household's escape time.
- Determine a meeting spot once outside of the home.
- Know how to contact the emergency service system giving your name and location/address clearly and calmly.

Fire is not only fast but only takes a few minutes to become life-threatening. The gases released can cause disorientation and drowsiness while the heat and smoke can be more dangerous than the flames. Many fires are preventable if we all are more aware and diligent. Please take the time to understand and practice fire safety so you don't find out the hard way.