

CHARLESTON

FIRE DEPARTMENT



Home Heating Safety

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Charleston, SC (December 23th, 2014): As we move past the first official day of winter and into the New Year, it is important to keep in mind home heating safety. Home fires are more prevalent in cold weather than during any other time of the year.

“We typically see an increase in home fires during the cold weather season,” said Community Educator Ryan Kunitzer. “The occurrence of residential fires increases in part due to home heating fires. Fire safety and injury prevention must not be lost in an effort to stay warm.”

Consider these tips for the winter months:

- Furnaces, fireplaces, and chimneys should be routinely cleaned and inspected by a qualified technician.
- Space heaters, furnaces, and fireplaces should not be within 3 feet of any combustibles.
- Keep children and pets away from space heaters.
- Dispose of fireplace ashes in a metal container and place the container away from combustible construction for 2-3 days before disposal.
- Allow kerosene heaters to cool and remove them to the outdoors before refueling.
- Never use your oven or stove for heating purposes.
- Install and maintain carbon monoxide (CO) alarms to avoid the risk of CO poisoning. Remember, carbon monoxide is a colorless and odorless gas.
- Carbon monoxide alarms are NOT a substitute for smoke alarms. Make sure a smoke alarm is on every level of your home and inside and outside of each sleeping areas.

During colder weather, the Charleston Fire Department experiences an increased call volume regarding burning smells and odors. When the furnace is turned on for the first time it will commonly emit a burning odor caused by the dust and lint burning off the heat strips. We encourage you to call the Fire Department if you are uncertain of the cause of the odor. Routine preventative maintenance of your home heating equipment can reduce this occurrence.

If you see or smell smoke, or have any type of emergency, please do not hesitate to dial 9-1-1. If you have any questions on heating safety, please contact Community Educator Ryan Kunitzer at 843-958-6401 or by email at kunitzerr@charleston-sc.gov.

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