

Heat It Up - Heating Safety

Tacoma Fire Prevention Bureau 3471 S. 35th St. Tacoma WA, 98409

Heat It Up - Heating Fire Safety

Heating equipment is a leading cause of home fires during the months of December, January and February. Two out of three reported home heating fire associated deaths and injuries involved portable and fixed space heaters and related equipment, such as fireplaces and chimneys. Check out the following information to be sure your heating equipment gets a passing grade when it comes to fire safety.

Baseboard Heaters

Baseboard heaters are very efficient, but they can be a serious fire hazard if used carelessly. Common sense can prevent a baseboard heater fire. Anytime a flammable object comes in contact with a heater, a fire could result.

Checklist for Baseboard Heaters

- _____ Check baseboard heaters often and remove objects that have fallen on top or near the heater.
- _____ Keep all furniture a safe distance from your heaters. Never block the flow of heat. Never permit electrical cords to drape across heaters.
- _____ Always hire an experienced electrician to do any necessary repair work on your baseboard heaters.

Portable Heaters

Portable models heat up rapidly, and like baseboard heaters, they can easily ignite any flammable item left nearby. When shopping for a portable heater, choose a model with:

- 1) temperature control,
- 2) an automatic shut-off device,
- 3) a seal of approval from an independent testing laboratory, indicating that it has met basic safety standards.

Checklist for Portable Heaters

- _____ Keep portable heaters three feet away from anything that can burn.
- _____ Always place portable heaters on flat surfaces.
- _____ Always turn the heater off when you leave the room or go to sleep.
- _____ Avoid using household extension cords with portable heaters. If you must use an extension cord, make certain that it is a heavy-duty cord and you use it only for short periods of time.

Fireplaces & Woodstoves

If you use a fireplace to heat your home have your chimney inspected by a professional and if necessary cleaned before each heating season. Creosote can build up along the inside of the chimney and pose a fire hazard.

Checklist for Fireplaces & Woodstoves

- _____ Always use a fire screen to contain sparks.
- _____ Never burn trash, rubbish or christmas trees.
- _____ Make certain anything flammable is kept a safe distance away from the fireplace.
- _____ Never leave fires unattended.
- _____ Clean out the ashes when cool and place in a metal container.

Just in Case

- _____ If a fire occurs in your home, a working smoke alarm can save your life.
- _____ Make certain smoke alarms are installed on every level of your home and in every sleeping area.
- _____ Test your smoke alarms monthly and change the batteries at least once a year.
- _____ Everyone in your home should know what to do in the event of a fire. Plan and practice a home escape plan.
- _____ Make sure everyone knows at least two ways out of every sleeping area. Decide upon a place outside of the home, where everyone will meet in the event of fire. Make certain everyone understands that once they have left a burning building they should never go back inside. Call 911 from a safe phone.

**For More Information Contact:
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