

October 2007

Emergency Preparedness Pointers

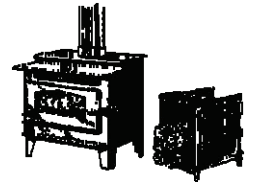
Don't get burned staying warm



As cooler temperatures arrive in the Treasure Valley, fireplaces, wood stoves and space heaters become sources of warmth in our homes. Here are some tips to keep them a comfort and not a hazard.

Wood Stoves

Wood stoves cause over 4,000 residential fires every year. Always follow the manufacturer's installation and maintenance instructions. Check for cracks and inspect legs, hinges and door seals for smooth joints and seams. Use only seasoned wood for fuel, not green wood or trash. Inspect and clean your pipes and chimneys annually and check monthly for damage or obstructions. Make sure to keep combustible objects at least three feet away from your wood stove.



Fireplaces



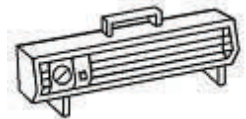
Fireplaces regularly build up creosote in their chimneys and need to be cleaned out frequently. Chimneys should be inspected for obstructions and cracks to prevent deadly chimney and roof fires. Check to make sure the damper is open before starting any fire and keep it open until ashes are cool. An open damper may help prevent the build up of poisonous gases (CO) in the home. Never burn trash, paper or green wood in your fireplace. These materials cause heavy creosote buildup and are difficult to control. Do not use gasoline or any liquid accelerant to start a fire. Use a screen heavy enough to stop rolling logs and big enough to cover the entire opening of the fireplace to catch flying sparks. Do not wear loose, flowing clothes near any open flame. Make sure the fire is completely out before leaving the house or going to bed. Store cooled ashes in a tightly sealed metal container outside the home.

Before you light your wood stove or fireplace, make sure to:

- Clear the roof, eaves and rain gutters of all limbs, needles and debris.
- Remove any branches hanging above or around the chimney.

Electric Space Heaters

Only buy heaters with the Underwriter's Laboratory (UL) safety listing. Make sure it has a thermostat control mechanism and will switch off automatically if the heater falls over. Heaters are not dryers or tables; do not attempt to dry clothes or store objects on top of your heater. Space heaters need space; keep combustibles at least three feet away from each heater. Always unplug your electric space heater when not in use.



SAFETY TIPS:

- Never use a gas range or oven for home heating.
- Install smoke alarms on every level of your house. Test them monthly and replace the batteries at least once a year.
- Always have in your home and know how to properly use an ABC rated fire extinguisher.
- Create and practice a family home evacuation plan; practice the plan at least twice a year.



Ada City -County Emergency Management
7200 Barrister Drive ♦ Boise, ID. 83704 ♦ (208) 577-4750 ♦ FAX (208) 577-4759
HOME PAGE: www.accem.org ♦ E-MAIL: pmarusich@adaweb.net
