

Supplemental Heating Safety Tips

More than one-fifth of residential fires are related to the use of supplemental room heaters, such as wood-burning stoves, kerosene heaters, gas space heaters, and electrical heaters.

For your safety and the safety of your family, always follow manufacturers' guidelines and instructions for the proper installation, maintenance, or use of the appliances.

Below are some safety tips and guidelines to help you reduce the chances that your family will experience a home fire.



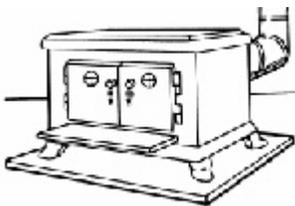
Chimneys

- Have chimneys inspected and cleaned by a professional chimney sweep. Creosote is an unavoidable product of wood burning stoves. Creosote builds up in chimney flues and can cause a chimney fire. To cut down on creosote buildup, avoid smoldering fires.
- Have your chimney inspected annually for damage and obstructions.
- Don't use excessive amounts of paper to build a fire. It's possible to ignite soot in the chimney by over-building the fire.



Woodstoves

- Follow the instructions on the stove label for proper location of the stove from combustible walls.
- Keep combustibles such as curtains, chairs, firewood, etc. at least three feet away from the stove.
- Use a code-specified or listed floor protector. It should extend 18 inches beyond the stove on all sides. This will reduce the possibility of the floor being ignited.
- Gasoline and other flammable liquids should never be used to start wood stove fires. Gasoline will ignite and explode.
- Artificial logs should never be used in wood stoves. This is because the heat can melt the log causing it to flare up or leak burning liquid from the appliance.
- Pressure-treated wood should not be burned in stoves because it contains a toxic chemical that can cause illness.
- Always use a metal container with a tight-fitting lid for ash removal.



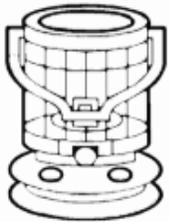
Fireplaces

- Fireplaces should have noncombustible materials around the opening and hearth. Be sure no flammable materials hang down from or decorate your mantel. A spark from your fireplace could ignite these materials and cause a fire.
- Always use a fireplace screen to keep sparks from igniting materials in the room. The screen should be large enough to catch rolling logs.
- Don't burn newspapers or other trash in a fireplace because they burn too hot and could overheat the stove or can ignite a chimney fire.
- Artificial logs are made from wax and sawdust and should be used one at a time in fireplaces.
- Pressure-treated wood should not be burned in fireplaces because it contains a toxic chemical that can cause illness.
- Never close your damper with hot ashes in the fireplace. A closed damper can help hot ashes build up heat, causing the fire to flare up and ignite your room.
- Always use a metal container with a tight-fitting lid for ash removal.



Kerosene Heaters

- *Never use gasoline.* Even small amounts of gasoline mixed with kerosene can increase the risk of fire.
- Use properly labeled containers. It reduces the likelihood of mistaking gasoline for kerosene.
- Place heater so it will not be knocked over or trap you in case of fire.
 - Use 1-K kerosene because grades other than 1-K contain much more sulfur and will increase sulfur dioxide emissions, posing a possible health problem. If you buy kerosene from a gasoline station make sure you and/or the attendant are using the kerosene pump, not the gasoline pump.
 - Never try to move the heater or try to smother the flames with a rug or a blanket if a flare-up occurs. Activate the manual shut-off switch and call the fire department. Moving the heater may increase the height of the flames and cause leakage resulting in personal injury.
- Never fill the heater while it is operating. Always refuel the heater outdoors to prevent spillage on floors and rugs, which could later result in fire ignition.
- Keep the room in which the heater operates ventilated (e.g. door open or the window ajar). This will prevent an indoor air pollution problem and minimize health problems.



Gas-Fired Heaters

- Follow the manufacturer's instructions regarding where and how to use gas space heaters. Unvented heaters should not be used in small, enclosed areas—especially bedrooms because of the potential for carbon monoxide poisoning.
- Keep a window ajar or the door open in a room where an unvented heater is in use.
- Do not use a propane heater (LP), which has a gas cylinder stored in the body of the heater. Its use is prohibited in most states and localities in the United States.
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions for lighting the pilot. Gas vapors may accumulate and ignite explosively, burning your hand or face.
- Light matches, if needed for lighting the pilot, before turning on the gas to prevent gas buildup.
- Do not operate a vented style heater unvented. It could allow combustion products, including carbon monoxide, to reach dangerous levels that will result in illness and death.



Portable Electric Heaters

- The heater should be listed by UL (Underwriter's Laboratory). It should be equipped with a safety light, loud alarm, a switch that automatically shuts the heater off if it tips and a cut-off device in case of overheating.
- Heaters should always be used on the floor and out of the way so that they won't be tipped over and come in contact with combustible flooring. Never place heaters on cabinets, tables, furniture or the like.
- Electric heaters should be operated at least three feet away from upholstered furniture, drapes, bedding and other combustible materials. Do not place heaters where towels or the like could fall on the appliance and trigger a fire.
- Avoid using extension cords unless absolutely necessary. If you must use an extension cord with your electric heater, make sure it is marked with a power rating at least as high as that of the heater itself. Keep the cord stretched out. Do not permit the cord to become buried under carpeting or rugs. Do not place anything on top of the cord. Electric heaters with frayed or damaged cords should never be used.
- Unless certified for that purpose, do not use heaters in wet or moist places, such as bathrooms; corrosion or other damage to parts in the heater may lead to a fire or shock hazard.
- Heaters should be turned off when family members leave the house or are sleeping.

