

MEDIA RELEASE

Potential electrical hazard and winter fire safety tips

FIREPLACES/WOOD STOVES

- Have flues inspected and cleaned annually – check for soot and creosote build-up and physical damage.
- Always use a fireplace screen.
- Use proper fire starters like newspaper or kindling – never use flammable liquids such as gasoline or lighter fluid.
- Allow fireplace ashes to cool overnight before disposing of them in a metal container. Place the container outside, at least ten feet from the house.

PORTABLE ELECTRIC SPACE HEATERS

- Make sure the heater is UL listed with automatic tip-over shut-off and high-temperature limit switch.
 - Keep at least three feet clearance from combustible items such as furniture, curtains, blankets, and paper.
 - Never use an extension cord with an electric heater; it can overload the electrical circuit.
 - Unplug heaters when not in use, leaving the room, or going to bed.
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CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTORS

- Install CO detectors in your home and test them periodically to be sure they are operating correctly.

CHRISTMAS TREES

- If using an artificial tree, be sure it is certified and labeled as fire retardant.
 - For live trees, cut an inch or two off the base of the trunk before installing in the stand; be sure to add water to the stand daily. Don't locate the tree near heat sources that would dry out the tree prematurely.
 - Use lights that are labeled by an independent testing laboratory; and check for worn or frayed wiring.
 - Always turn off lights before leaving the house or going to bed.
 - Never use candles to decorate a tree.
 - Remove the tree when needles start dropping. Take the tree to a re-cycling location; don't keep it near the house since it is extremely flammable when dry.
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