

HOME HEATING FIRES

Fast Facts

- Heating fires are the second leading cause of home fires.**
- Fixed and portable space heaters, including wood stoves, are involved in 74 percent of fire-related deaths.**
- Nearly half of American families use alternative heating sources such as space heaters, fireplaces, or wood/coal stoves to stay warm.*
- Each year over 200 people die from carbon monoxide produced by fuel burning appliances in the home including furnaces, ranges, water heaters and room heaters.***
- The number of home fires the American Red Cross has responded to has risen 10% since 2000.*
- Only 26 percent of families have actually developed and practiced a home fire escape plan.*
- Eighty percent of Americans don't realize that home fires are the single most common disaster across the nation.*
- Having a working smoke alarm reduces one's chances of dying in a fire by nearly half.**

Prevention Tips

- ✓ Keep all potential sources of fuel like paper, clothing, bedding or rugs at least three feet away from space heaters, stoves, or fireplaces.
- ✓ Portable heaters and fireplaces should never be left unattended. Turn off space heaters and make sure any embers in the fireplace are extinguished before going to bed or leaving home.
- ✓ If you must use a space heater, place it on a level, hard and nonflammable surface (such as ceramic tile floor), not on rugs or carpets or near bedding or drapes. Keep children and pets away from space heaters.
- ✓ When buying a space heater, look for models that shut off automatically if the heater falls over as another safety measure.
- ✓ Never use a cooking range or oven to heat your home.
- ✓ Keep fire in your fireplace by using a glass or metal fire screen large enough to catch sparks and rolling logs.
- ✓ Have wood and coal stoves, fireplaces, chimneys, and furnaces professionally inspected and cleaned once a year.
- ✓ Visit www.redcross.org/homefires for more information on how to prevent heating fires.