

Stay Warm, but Stay Safe

The National Volunteer Fire Council (NVFC) and Fire Corps have teamed up to provide these fire safety tips, helping to keep your families, friends, and communities safer. Please share these tips and continue to pass on the message of fire safety every day. Together we can all make a difference.

Cooler weather will soon be approaching and many people will pull out their space heaters, cover up with electric blankets, or light the fireplace. Here are some safety tips to keep in mind as you turn up the heat this fall and winter.

Space Heater Safety:

- Keep objects at least 3 feet away from a space heater to prevent them from catching fire. Pay special attention to rugs, curtains, and combustible materials.
- Place portable heaters in a low traffic area where people will not be in danger of tripping over them.
- If the heater does not have a thermostat or built-in protection from overturning, replace it with a new heater.
- Unplug the space heater when leaving your home.

Fireplace Safety:

- Have a professional examine your chimney annually for problems.
- Avoid the use of gasoline, kerosene, or lighter fluids to light your fireplace. Instead, use small bits of paper or kindling.
- Keep the hearth clear of combustible materials such as wood, books, and loose paper.
- Roll up loose sleeves on shirts, and if you have long hair, make sure it is pulled back to prevent it from catching fire.
- Do not leave the fire unattended for any length of time.
- Always use a screen around the fireplace to keep kids and pets safe.
- Make certain that the fire has completely died out before leaving or going to bed.
- Install a carbon monoxide detector.

Reproduced from Hearth, Patio, & Barbeque Association (HPBA) web site,
www.hpba.org.

Electric Blanket Safety:

- If the blanket gets wet, do not turn it on to dry it.
- When not in use, roll the blanket instead of folding it to ensure that the wires will not be damaged.
- Discontinue use if any of the following apply: wires are poking out of the material, the fabric is unraveling, or if burnt patches of fabric are visible.
- If the blanket is over ten years old, replace it.

Reproduced from the UK Fire Service web site,
www.fireservice.co.uk/safety/electricblankets.php.