

Put the Freeze on Winter Fires and Burns!

The winter months bring about a whole new set of fire and burn hazards, including things related to home heating, candles, and even snow removal! December, January, and February are the leading months for US home fires and home fire deaths. This issue is filled with useful tips to prevent these devastating fires and burns, and keep your family safe!



Did you know this about snow?

Did you know that snow increases the risk of carbon monoxide poisoning? High snow drifts may block furnace vents and air intakes, especially those that have newer, higher efficiency furnaces. These types of furnaces vent out of the side of the house rather than up through the roof...they need to be kept clear of snow ...to prevent the carbon monoxide from going back into the house.

Some furnaces have an automatic device that shuts them off if they become blocked, but not all of them. Please keep a three foot area clear around the vents to prevent carbon monoxide poisoning! Be sure your dryer vents are clear as well.

- ⇒ Also be sure to remove snow around street address markers so fire-fighters can find you in an emergency.
- ⇒ Be sure that fire hydrants are clear of snow at all times as well!



Candles

On average, a candle fire is reported in the US every 30 minutes!

- ⇒ Use candle holders that are sturdy and won't easily tip over.
- ⇒ Always blow out candles before leaving the room. Never leave candles unattended, especially around young children!
- ⇒ Keep candles at least 12 inches away from anything that can burn.
- ⇒ Avoid use of candles in the bedroom or other area where people could fall asleep with them burning.
- ⇒ Consider using the safest alternative to traditional candles, the battery operated LED "flameless candle". They give you the same pleasant atmosphere without any of the danger of fire or burns!



COMING SOON!

We are very excited to announce the upcoming launch of our newest program, "**Home Safe Home**". This program is targeted at parents and caregivers of small children, ages 0-4. This age range is at a much higher risk of burns, particularly scalds, because of environmental risks and the fact that their skin is much thinner than the average adults. This program teaches parents and caregivers of these little ones the steps they need to take to make their home safe! The entire program is available in both English and Spanish. Please visit www.homesafehome.org. This website allows you to view our Home Safe Home video, download the "Home Safe Home Checklist", and contains countless other resources!



Watch what you heat!

With the high cost of heating fuels, it can be tempting to seek out alternative methods of heating your home. While some of these methods may be perfectly safe, others may be contributing factors to winter home fires. The following tips can help prevent fires!



WOODSTOVES AND FIREPLACES:

- ⇒ Have your chimney inspected annually, and cleaned if necessary.
- ⇒ Keep a glass or metal screen in front of the fireplace opening, to prevent embers or sparks from jumping out, unwanted material from going in, and help prevent the possibility of burns to occupants.
- ⇒ When there are small children in the home, make sure you have a safety gate surrounding the entire fireplace area.
- ⇒ Do not use flammable liquids to start or accelerate any fire.
- ⇒ Make sure the fire is completely extinguished before going to bed.

SPACE HEATERS:

- ⇒ Keep the heater at least three feet away from bedding, drapes, furniture, and other flammable materials.
- ⇒ Keep children and pets away from space heaters.
- ⇒ Turn the heater off if you leave the area.
- ⇒ If you must use an extension cord, make sure it is a heavy duty cord marked with a power rating at least as high as the label of the heater itself.
- ⇒ Never leave a space heater running or unattended while you sleep.
- ⇒ Keep electric heaters away from water. Never use them in a sink or bathroom.
- ⇒ Never use gasoline in a kerosene heater. Even a small amount of gas mixed with kerosene can increase the risk of fire.
- ⇒ Don't use portable propane space heaters indoors or in any confined space unless they are specifically designed for indoor use.



Do you have an escape plan?

In the event that you have a fire in your home, it is crucial that your entire family knows what to do.

- ⇒ Complete a home escape plan, and PRACTICE it with your family! Make sure everyone knows where your meeting spot will be.
- ⇒ Make sure you know TWO WAYS OUT of every room.
- ⇒ Determine who will be responsible for very young children or anyone with a disability.
- ⇒ Crawl low through smoke.
- ⇒ Make sure windows and screens can easily be opened.
- ⇒ Test doors with the back of your hand. Never go through a door that feels hot to the touch!
- ⇒ Once you have escaped, STAY OUT. Do not go back inside for any reason!
- ⇒ Smoke alarms save lives! Make sure you have functioning smoke alarms on every level of your home and in every sleeping area. Test them monthly and change the batteries once a year!

RECALL!!

About 275,000 Wolverine, Spider-Man, and Iron Man 2 projector flashlights sold at Dollar Tree, Dollar Bill\$, DollarTree \$1 Stop, Deal\$, and DollarTree Deal\$ stores nationwide since August 2010 have been recalled.



The flashlights can cause the batteries and/or bulb to overheat, posing burn hazards.

If you own one, return it to the store for a full refund or call 1-800-876-8077.