

Fire Safety

Hot Tips To Help You Avoid Home Heating Fires

(NAPSA)—Heating equipment is the second-leading cause of home fires in the United States. More than 65,000 home fires are attributed to heating equipment each year.

Following these Dos and Don'ts, however, can help protect your home and family:

Do have a qualified service professional install stationary space heating equipment, water heaters or central heating equipment according to code and manufacturer's instructions and then have the system inspected annually.

Don't use your stove to heat your home or dry your clothes.

Do install and maintain smoke and carbon monoxide alarms and test them monthly.

Don't plug a space heater into an extension cord.

Do plug it directly into an electric outlet.

Don't leave any heating appliance unattended.

Do turn heaters off when you leave the room or go to sleep.

Don't use a space heater or any appliance with a damaged cord.

Do place any heater at least three feet away from anything flammable.

Don't use old, worn heating pads or electric blankets with frayed cords. These cause almost 500 fires a year, almost all of them involving electric blankets that are more than 10 years old.

Do place heaters on level, flat surfaces on the floor, not on tables, shelves or chairs.

Don't use both a heating pad—placed directly on the mattress—and an electric blanket at the same time.

Do keep heating pads and electric blankets uncovered when in use. When covered by anything, including other



Space heaters can provide supplemental heat for chilly rooms but they're also a leading cause of fires, so proper care is vital.

blankets or pets, electric blankets may overheat.

Don't fold electric blankets when in use. Folded or tucked-in blankets could overheat and cause a fire.

Do keep a three-foot "kid-free zone" around open fires and space heaters.

Don't use the wrong kind of fuel for fuel-burning space heaters.

Do make sure the fireplace has a sturdy screen to stop sparks from flying into the room.

Don't be in too much of a hurry to shovel out the ashes. Let them cool before putting them in a metal container. Keep the container a safe distance away from your home.

Learn More

For further facts and tips on safety, from the experts at Electrical Safety Foundation International, the premier nonprofit organization dedicated exclusively to promoting electrical safety at home and in the workplace, visit www.esfi.org.