

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS POINTER

FEBRUARY 2023



HEAT YOUR HOME SAFELY

Winter is a time where many people choose to use alternative heating methods such as fireplaces, space heaters, and fuel-fired equipment to make their homes warm and cozy. Alternative heating sources also provide a great heating source in the event of a power outage, but they also increase your risk of starting a home fire. Heating is the second most common cause of home fires. The U.S. Fire Administration provides the following tips on heating your home safely:

- Keep anything at least 3 feet from any heating source
- Use a screen in front of your fireplace to prevent embers from coming out
- Plug space heaters directly into an outlet and never into an extension cord
- Turn off all portable space heaters when leaving the room or going to bed



Heating your Home During a Power Outage

Power outages can cause many home heating problems during the winter. There are several steps you can take to weatherproof your home for a winter power outage. Insulating your attic and weather-stripping doors and windows is effective in preventing cold air from seeping in. If your home has a fireplace, be sure to have your chimney or flue inspected on a yearly basis and cleaned as needed. Avoid using candles during a power outage. Candles can cause a house fire if left unattended. Most importantly make sure you have smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors if you use an alternative heating source. If power lines are down near your home, call your power provider and emergency services.

Have your Furnace Inspected Annually

If your primary heating source is a furnace, it is important to have a professional check your furnace system on a yearly basis. Things that should be checked include the thermostat, electrical connections, all moving furnace parts, the condensate drain, and the controls of the system. Other heating specific items that should also be checked include inspecting all gas connections, gas pressure, burner combustion, and heat exchanger in your furnace. For more information about furnace maintenance, visit:

https://www.energystar.gov/campaign/heating_cooling/maintenance_checklist

References

USFA (n.d.). Heating Fire Safety. Retrieved from: [link to site](#)

Energy Star (n.d.). Maintenance Checklist. Retrieved from: [link to site](#)



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