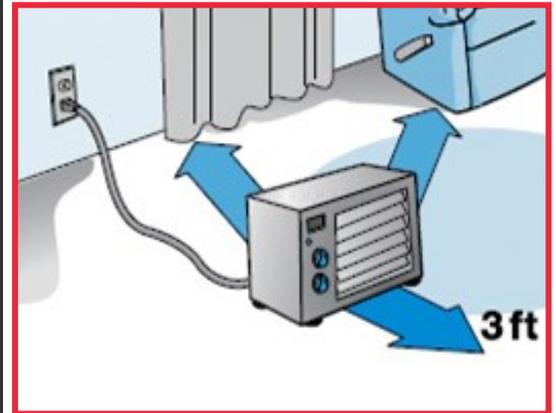


EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS POINTER

Home Heating Safety

Winter is a time where many people choose to use alternative heating methods in place of electric heat. Alternative methods include 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 tips on heating safety that include:

- ▲ Keep a safe space of at least 3 feet from any heating source
- ▲ Use a screen in front of your fireplace to prevent sparks from flying
- ▲ Use the correct kind of fuel for fuel-burning space heaters
- ▲ 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 for homeowners in 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 Checked

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/index.cfm?c=heat_cool.pr_maintenance

