

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE DEPARTMENT OF SAFETY

John J. Barthelmes, Commissioner



Division of Fire Safety

OFFICE OF THE STATE FIRE MARSHAL

J. William Degnan, State Fire Marshal



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: January 7, 2015

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Chief David Parenti, President NH Association of Fire Chiefs 267-8333

Keep Safe and Warm This Winter

The temperature outside has dropped and **New Hampshire** families take to the indoors to keep safe and warm. What they may not realize is that turning up the heat can increase the risk of home heating fires.

According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), half of all home-heating fires occur during the winter months. On average, heating equipment is involved in more than 60,000 reported U.S. home structure fires per year and New Hampshire is no exception. "While these numbers are frightening, nearly all of these fires are preventable," said J. William Degnan, New Hampshire State Fire Marshal. "We can reduce the number of home heating fires in our state by taking some simple precautions and using heating equipment properly."

Marshal Degnan and Chief David Parenti, President of the NH Association of Fire Chiefs recommend some simple home heating safety tips, so residents can help keep our citizens safe and warm this winter.

Portable Heaters

- Only use portable heaters from a RECOGNIZED testing laboratory.
- Make sure the heater has an automatic SHUT-OFF so if it tips over, it shuts off.
- Keep anything combustible at least THREE feet away from the heater.
- Plug portable heaters directly into OUTLETS. Never plug a portable heater into an extension cord or power strip.
- Turn heaters OFF when going to bed or leaving the room.

Fireplaces

- Keep a glass or metal SCREEN in front of the fireplace to prevent embers or sparks from jumping out.
- Do not burn PAPER in the fireplace.
- Put the fire OUT before going to sleep or leaving the home.
- Allow ashes to COOL before disposing of them in a metal container with a lid, outside, at least ten feet from the home.

Wood & Pellet Stoves

- Have a QUALIFIED professional install, (inspect each year) stove, chimney connectors, and chimneys.
- Make sure the stove is THREE feet away from anything combustible.
- In wood stoves, burn only DRY, seasoned wood. In pellet stoves, burn only dry, seasoned wood pellets.
- Allow ashes to COOL before disposing of them in a metal container with a lid, outside, at least ten feet from the home.

Install and maintain carbon monoxide alarms (CO) outside each sleeping area and on every level of the home. For the best protection, interconnect the CO alarms. When one sounds, they all sound.



For fuel assistance, contact the National Energy Assistance Referral Line at 866-674-6327 or visit www.energynear.org.

Sprinklers Save Lives

Check your Smoke Alarms