

FIRE SAFETY IN THE NEWS

Alternative Heater Safety

When a member of your community is killed in a home fire, it is important to let others know how they can prevent a similar tragedy. As you continue to report on the fire, the U.S. Fire Administration encourages you to remind your audience that many fire deaths and injuries are preventable.

More than 4,000 Americans die each year in fires and approximately 20,000 are injured. Many of them might be alive today if only they had the information they needed to avoid a disaster.

The following life-saving tips could make a big difference to your audience. By incorporating them in your story now, while the moment is still fresh, you could help save a life.

Alternative Heater Safety Life-Saving Tips

- ☑ Install a smoke alarm on every level of your home. Test smoke alarm batteries every month and change them at least once a year. Consider installing a 10-year lithium battery-powered smoke alarm, which is sealed so it cannot be tampered with or opened.
- ☑ Kerosene heaters are not permitted in many areas. If you use a kerosene heater, use only the recommended fuel. Always refuel outdoors safely away from your home.
- ☑ Allow your heater to cool before refueling and only refuel outdoors.
- ☑ Keep the fire in the fireplace by making sure you have a screen large enough to catch flying sparks and rolling logs.
- ☑ Clean your chimney regularly – chimney tar build-up can ignite your chimney, roof, and the whole house.
- ☑ Space heaters need space. Keep combustibles at least 3 feet away from each heater.
- ☑ When buying a space heater, look for a control feature that automatically shuts off the power if the heater falls over.
- ☑ Carefully follow manufacturers' installation and maintenance instructions.
- ☑ For wood stove fuel use only seasoned wood, not green wood, artificial logs, or trash.
- ☑ In case of a fire, stay low to the ground, beneath the smoke, and have an escape plan already worked out. Get out. Stay out.

Did you know?

- ▶ Eighty-two percent of all fire deaths occur in the home.
- ▶ Heating is the second leading cause of residential fires.
- ▶ Deaths due to fires caused by heating a home are particularly preventable.
- ▶ Having a working smoke alarm reduces one's chances of dying in a fire by nearly half.

Following these simple fire safety tips can increase survival rates dramatically. Please share them with your audience because knowledge is the best fire protection.

For more information on the U.S. Fire Administration Public Education Campaigns or to speak with a USFA spokesperson please call 202-842-3600. Also visit www.usfa.fema.gov or www.firesafety.gov for additional information on fire safety.



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