

# Safety | Tips Home Heating Safety

We all need heat to keep our homes warm and comfortable during the winter months. The equipment we use to heat our homes can be dangerous if it is not designed, installed, used or maintained properly. Follow these safety tips to help prevent fires or other hazards during the heating seasons.

## Heating Equipment (furnaces, space heaters, and water heaters)

- Purchase heating equipment that has been certified by a recognized testing agency such as; the Canadian Standards Association (CSA); Intertek Testing Services (ITS); or the Underwriters Laboratories of Canada (ULC). Certified appliances will be labeled with the symbol of the testing agency.
- Always follow the manufacturer's installation instruction and user manual before operating equipment.
- Have your furnace, space heater, water heater, stove, fireplace, etc. checked annually by a qualified professional.
- A pilot flame can ignite flammable liquid vapours, so keep flammable liquids and chemicals such as gasoline, solvents and flammable cleaning liquids away from your home heating equipment.
- Keep the area around the heating equipment clear of combustibles; the heat generated from appliances can ignite furniture, blankets and clothing within close proximity.
- Do not put clothing on space heating equipment to dry.
- Inspect electrical cords on heaters, Do not use if frayed or splitting as they may overheat when in use and could create a fire hazard.
- Supervise children when they are in a room with heating equipment and if possible, keep children away from your home heating equipment.

## Wood and Coal stoves, heaters and fireplaces

- Use only the fuel for which the heating equipment was designed and approved to burn.
- Don't use flammable/combustible liquids to start a fire.
- Make sure the stove or heater is placed at least one metre (three feet) away from the wall.
- Place an approved stove board under the stove or heater to protect the floor from heat and hot coals.
- Have your chimney checked and cleaned annually by a qualified person.
- Always supervise a fire and make sure the fire is completely out before leaving the house or going to bed.
- Use small amounts of dry, well-seasoned wood. Don't burn scrap paper, Christmas trees, or other waste in the fireplace.

## Carbon monoxide

- All fuel-burning appliances need a supply of fresh air to burn properly. Without proper ventilation, heating equipment can produce carbon monoxide, a poisonous gas. Check that all appliances have a source of fresh air and a vent to the outside.
- For more information see Alberta Municipal Affairs Safety Tips for Carbon Monoxide at [www.municipalaffairs.alberta.ca/documents/ss/COsafety.pdf](http://www.municipalaffairs.alberta.ca/documents/ss/COsafety.pdf)

Last updated/reviewed July 2016

For more information, please call Municipal Affairs, Safety Services at 1-866-421-6929 or visit [www.municipalaffairs.alberta.ca](http://www.municipalaffairs.alberta.ca)

