



Washington State Patrol • State Fire Marshal Chad Cross

*** For Immediate Release***

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Heating and Space Heater Safety

Olympia- During the coldest months of the year, home heating equipment is used more frequently, increasing the risk of fire. According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), space heaters are the leading cause of home heating equipment fires. The NFPA reports that an average of 45,800 home heating fires occurred each year between 2015 and 2019, resulting in 480 civilian deaths, 1,350 civilian injuries, and one billion dollars in property damage. In Washington State, fires caused by home heating equipment caused at least 4 fatalities in 2024.

The State Fire Marshal's Office recommends these key fire safety tips:

- Have furnaces inspected and serviced annually by a qualified professional.
- Keep anything that can burn at least three feet away from furnaces, fireplaces, and space heaters.
- If you smell gas, whether natural gas or propane, leave the building immediately and call 911 once you are safely outside.
- When using space heaters, only use space heaters equipped with an automatic shut-off feature in case they tip over.
- Plug space heaters directly into a wall outlet and never use extension cords or power strips.
- Avoid plugging other devices into the same outlet or circuit as a space heater.
- Place space heaters on a solid, flat surface to reduce the risk of tipping.
- Turn off space heaters when you go to bed or leave the room.

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