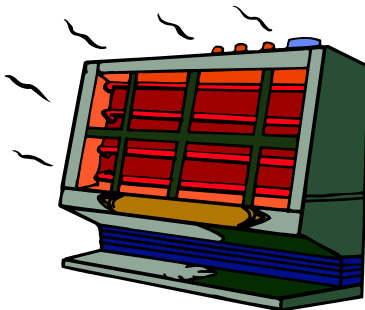


## Frederick County Fire and Rescue Department Wants to Keep You Safe and Warm This Winter



As the temperature outside begins to drop, Frederick County 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), nearly half of all home-heating fires occur during the winter months. The latest NFPA research shows that heating equipment was involved in 66,400 reported U.S. home structure fires in 2007, with associated losses of 580 civilian deaths, 1,850 civilian injuries, and \$608 million in direct property damage.

NFPA and **Frederick County** recommend some simple home heating safety tips, so residents can help keep our community safe and warm this winter.

- Space heaters need space. Keep all things that can burn, such as paper, bedding or furniture, at least 3 feet away from heating equipment.
- Turn portable heaters off when you go to bed or leave the room.
- Plug power cords only into outlets with sufficient capacity and never into an extension cord.
- Inspect for cracked, frayed or broken plugs or loose connections. Replace before using.
- Have your chimney inspected each year and cleaned if necessary.
- Use a sturdy fireplace screen.
- Allow ashes to cool before disposing. Dispose of ashes in a metal container.
- Install smoke alarms in every bedroom, outside each sleeping area and on every level of the home. For the best protection interconnect all smoke alarms throughout the home — when one sounds, they all sound. Test smoke alarms at least once a month.
- Install and maintain a carbon monoxide alarm in a central location outside each sleeping area.
- Never use an oven to heat your home.

