



HEAT SMART

WINTER 2006 -2007 CAMPAIGN

District of Columbia Public Service Commission

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*Promoting
Savings and
Conservation
of Energy in
the District*

HEATING SAFETY TIPS

Fireplaces and Chimneys

- Never leave fire unattended.
- Check chimney and stove pipes frequently for creosote build-up and have them inspected and cleaned by a professional annually.
- Make sure your fireplace has a sturdy screen that prevents sparks from escaping into the room.
- Never overload the fireplace and position logs towards the rear.
- Use only properly-seasoned wood; experts recommend a moisture content of 20-25%.
- Wood supply should be kept outdoors, not near the fireplace.
- Ensure the damper is closed when the fireplace is not in use, but be sure the fire is out first.

General Heating Safety

- Equip your home with at least one smoke alarm on each floor and outside sleeping areas.
- Install a carbon monoxide alarm outside each sleeping area.
- Keep at least one dry-powder operative, ABC type fire extinguisher in your home.
- Buy and use only tested and certified heating equipment; look for the Underwriter's Laboratory (UL) label.
- Keep doors open to the rest of the house if using an unvented fuel-burning unit.
- Never leave a space heater on when you go to sleep or leave the area.
- Washington Gas's Emergency Phone Line is (202) 624-6049 or (703) 750-1000 or TTY (703) 750-7975.
- PEPCO's Emergency Phone Line is (202) 872-3432 or TTY (202) 872-2369.
- Be careful when using candles or lanterns as a light or heat source—never leave them lit when someone is not in the room.

Gas Space Heaters

- As with any space heater, keep the unit on the floor and at least 3 feet away from flammable objects.
- For vented space heaters, be sure that the heater and flue are properly installed, and regularly maintained and inspected.
- Buy and use only vented heaters with a shut-off device that will turn off if not ventilating properly.
- If the pilot light goes out and you smell gas, do not attempt to light the appliance. Turn off all the controls, open windows and doors and leave the area. Call a gas service person.
- Never fill the fuel tank beyond the full mark

Electric Space Heaters

- As with any space heater, keep the unit on the floor and at least 3 feet away from flammable objects.
- Buy and use only electric heaters with a tip-over switch that will turn off the unit until it is turned upright.
- Do not use heaters in moist or wet places such as bathrooms.
- Do not hide electrical cords under rugs or carpets.
- Do not use an extension cord unless absolutely necessary. If you must use one, select only heavy-duty cords marked #14 or #12 A WG.
- Be aware that electric space heaters are very energy inefficient. The government's EnergyStar® program does not rate their efficiency.
- Electric blankets can cause fires, especially if they are used improperly or left on unattended. Use only nationally-tested blankets and take care to not damage the heat coils by sitting or laying on them.