



# WINTER SAFETY TIPS



## Winter is a time when household fires occur. It is a good time to remember to:

- Install a smoke alarm near bedrooms and on each floor of your home.
- Install a carbon monoxide (CO) alarm near bedrooms and on each floor of your home. If the alarm sounds, call 9-1-1 and immediately move to fresh air. Know the symptoms of CO poisoning: headache, fatigue, dizziness, and shortness of breath.
- Change all detector batteries twice a year. Test all detectors on a monthly basis.
- Make sure heating equipment is installed properly. Have a trained technician inspect/service your heating system annually.
- Keep portable space heaters at least 3 feet from anything that can burn, including bedding, furniture, and clothing.
- Keep children and pets away from space heaters. Never leave children in a room alone when a space heater is in use.
- Have your fireplace chimney and flue inspected each year and cleaned as needed. Open the flue and use a sturdy fireplace screen when you have a fire. Burn only untreated wood; never burn paper or pine branches--pieces can float out the chimney and ignite your roof, a neighbor's roof, or nearby trees.
- Keep fire extinguishers on hand, and make sure everyone in your house knows how to use them. House fires pose an additional risk, as more people turn to alternate heating sources without taking the necessary safety precautions.
- Practice fire drills with all family members. Remember **Exit-Drills-In-The-Home**.
- Never use portable generators indoors.
- Never use your range or oven to heat your home, even for a short time.

## Prepare a Winter Storm Plan:

- Have extra blankets on hand.
- Ensure that each member of your household has a warm coat, gloves or mittens, hat, scarf, and water-resistant boots. Wear layers to protect yourself from the cold winter weather.
- Remove dead tree branches. Ice and snow, combined with winter winds, can cause limbs to snap. Clean gutters. Snow and ice can build up quickly, especially if your gutters are clogged with debris. When thawing begins, water from melting ice has nowhere to drain and can back up under your roof and eaves, causing water damage to walls and ceilings. Consider installing screens to keep your gutters debris-free.
- Check your homeowner's insurance policy to make sure coverage is adequate for the type of winter weather in your area.
- During winter, drain pipes if your power goes off or if you plan an extended stay away from home. To drain, turn off the water heater and main water supply, open all faucets in the house and drain the system by keeping the valves open. Drain all toilets by holding the lever down until the tank empties. If well water is used, the pump's electric switch should be shut off and the pressure tank and system should be drained.

## Assemble a Disaster Supplies Kit Containing:

- First aid kit and essential prescription medications.
- Battery-powered NOAA Weather radio, flashlights, and extra batteries.
- Nonperishable foods that can be eaten without heating. Keep bottled water/juices and a manual can opener on hand in case your power and water supplies are interrupted. For bottled water have at least one gallon of water per person per day to last at least 3 days. Don't forget to have water for your pets as well.
- Extra warm clothing, including boots, mittens, and a hat.
- Wood for fireplaces. Safety matches (Kept out of the reach and sight of children)
- Rock salt to melt ice and sand to improve traction.
- Assemble a Disaster Supplies Kit for your car, too. Make sure your car is in proper working condition and includes blankets, warm clothing, booster cables and tools, bottled water, dried fruits and nuts, a first aid kit, a fire extinguisher, flashlights and batteries, a shovel and ice scraper.

## Stay Tuned for Storm Warnings:

- Listen to NOAA Weather Radio and/or your local radio and TV stations for storm information.

**HAVE SAFE WINTER SEASON!!!**

Brought to you by the **West Paterson Volunteer Fire Department**

