

# Heating safety tips for your home, heat it up – don't burn it down

Now that cold weather has arrived, here's timely advice from Tualatin Valley Fire and Rescue on how to keep warm and safe.

## Furnace Safety

- Inspect and clean your furnace prior to each heating season.
- Follow appliance directions for oiling motors and checking drive belts, replace worn belts as necessary.
- If you can't locate appliance instructions or are unsure of how to maintain or service your unit, contact a professional furnace service company to assist you.
- Periodically inspect and replace furnace filters to ensure the efficiency of your system.
- Keep combustible items such as boxes, flammable liquids, newspapers, etc., at least three feet away from the pilot

light of a gas furnace.

## Portable Heaters



- Use only Underwriters Laboratories (UL)-approved portable heaters and follow the manufacturer's operating instructions.
- Never use kerosene, propane, or other outdoor-use heaters indoors. They may start a fire and there is a high risk of

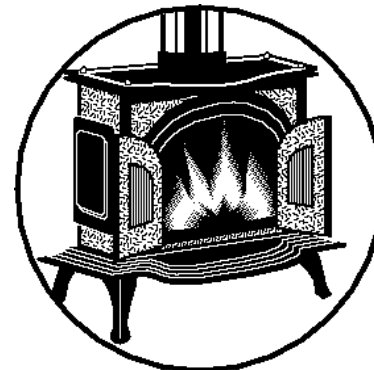
carbon monoxide poisoning.

- Make sure your portable heater has a "tip switch" which automatically shuts off the heater in the event the unit is knocked over.
- Many units have exposed surfaces which become very hot. Keep portable heaters at least three feet away from combustibles such as bedding, furniture, and/or drapes.
- Keep children and pets away from all portable heaters.
- Never dry clothes or shoes by placing them on top of a heating unit.
- Always turn off space heaters when you go to bed or leave the house.
- Never use an electric heater near water, such as in a bathroom.
- Do not plug other devices into an outlet used by an electric space heater.
- Portable heaters are temporary heating units for single

rooms – don't try to heat an entire house with them.

- And finally, don't go to sleep without turning off your portable heater.

## Fireplaces and Woodstoves



- Make sure your fireplace or woodstove is installed according to the local building codes and manufacturer's instructions.

• Have your chimney and flue pipes inspected for cracks and cleaned by a professional. Leaks could bring deadly carbon monoxide fumes into your home.

- Install a tight-fitting fireplace screen or place a sturdy screen in front of your fireplace.
- Before lighting a fire, make sure the flue is unobstructed and that the damper is open.
- Never burn newspapers,

wrapping paper, or greenery in a fireplace or woodstove.

• Never use gasoline, lighter fluid, or any other petroleum products to start or rekindle a fire.

• Burn only dry, seasoned wood in your woodstove or fireplace to prevent the buildup of creosote.

• Keep your fire manageable. A fire that grows too large and hot can cause a chimney fire.

• Keep all combustible materials at least three feet away from the fireplace or woodstove.

• Dispose of ashes in a metal container with a lid and store the container far away from combustibles such as a deck or siding. Keep the ashes in this container for a minimum of five days

## Carbon Monoxide Poisoning

Symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning may include slight headache or dizziness, nausea, drowsiness or euphoric feeling, confusion or irritability, and unconsciousness.

Everyone is at risk for carbon monoxide poisoning, however, unborn babies, infants, children, senior citizens, and people with heart or lung problems may be more vulnerable to poisoning.

## State park passes can be good gift

Day-use passes good for 12 months at selected Oregon state parks are now on sale at a \$20 holiday discount price.

The passes, which normally sell for \$25, will be good through December 31, 2006, at the 26 parks that charge the per vehicle day-use fee. Visitors without 12-month or 24-month passes must buy a \$3 daily pass at those locations.

The 12-month and 24-month passes are sold at major Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) offices, all Oregon G.I. Joe's locations, 30 state park Friends' group interpretive stores, local businesses and chambers of commerce around the state. A list of all the vendors is posted at <[http://www.oregonstateparks.org/dayuse\\_permit\\_vendors.php](http://www.oregonstateparks.org/dayuse_permit_vendors.php)>.

Passes may also be purchased by phone and charged to a VISA or MasterCard by

calling the State Parks Information Center, 1-800-551-6949.

"The pass makes a great gift – one that keeps on giving all year," said OPRD Recreation Programs Manager Richard Walkoski. "It provides a great savings for a frequent visitor to our day-use fee parks. It also eliminates the inconvenience of stopping to pay at an entrance booth or buying a daily permit from a vending machine."

OPRD's 24-month pass sells for \$40. "That pass has a built-in, year-round discount," Walkoski noted.

Customers may purchase extra vehicle passes at the time they buy either 12-month or 24-month passes (for \$5 with a 12-month pass; \$10 with a 24-month pass). Extra vehicle passes must be bought at the same time the original passes are purchased.



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