



Heater Safety Fact Sheet

West Metro Fire Rescue District is asking residents of Crystal and New Hope to follow safety precautions when purchasing and using electric or fuel-fired heaters. If heaters are misused they can cause injury and/or death to the occupant or to others in a building. We want everyone to be safe!

Due to the increasing cost of heating a home or apartment many people in the community are looking at alternative heating arrangements. In the recent year, there were about 10,900 residential fires and about 190 deaths associated with portable or fixed space heaters. In addition an average of about 85 people die each year from carbon monoxide poisoning caused by heating systems, ranges/ovens and water heaters.

Here are some heater safety tips to follow:

- Use a heater that has been tested to the latest safety standards and certified by a nationally-recognized testing laboratory. These heaters will have to most up-to-date safety features; older space heaters may not meet the newer safety standards. You can check on your heater /box for a label indicating it has been certified by a nationally recognized testing laboratory.
- Place the heater on a level, hard and nonflammable surface, not on rugs or carpets or near bedding or drapes. *Keep heater at least three feet from bedding, drapes, furniture and other flammable materials. Heaters can cause fires if they are placed too close to flammable materials such as the items listed above.*
- Never leave a space heater on when you go to sleep. Never place a space heater close to any sleeping person.
- Turn the space heater off if you leave the area. Keep pets and children away from space heaters.
- Do not use kitchen range or oven to heat your house because it could overheat or generate excessive carbon monoxide.
- Always check your smoke alarms monthly to verify they are working in your home. And replace the batteries every-time you change the clock. In addition it is recommended to have a carbon monoxide alarm outside the bedroom areas.
- If using unvented heaters with a open flame be sure to keep door and window open in house to make sure there is proper ventilation. Make sure your heater is correctly rated for your home. This will help to prevent a build-up of carbon monoxide in your home which can be fatal.

We hope these safety tips will help keep you, your loved one, and your apartment building, home safe from fire. Should you have any questions about fire safety, please contact the Fire Prevention Staff at West Metro Fire Rescue District at (763) 537- 2323 extension 2004 or 2003.