

Advice for Staying Safe and Warm

October 30, 2012



In many areas the temperatures are plummeting. If you are at home and without power, IBHS offers the following guidance for using alternative heating devices:
WOOD STOVE

Maintain at least a 36-inch clearance between the stove and combustible materials, such as furniture and clothing.

Prior to using the stove, place a layer of sand or firebrick in the bottom of the firebox.

SPACE HEATER

Maintain a 36-inch clearance between the heater and combustible materials, such as bedding, furniture, wall coverings or other flammable items.

Do not leave a heater unattended.

Electric heaters should be inspected prior to use. Check the cord for fraying, cracking and look for broken wires or signs of overheating in the device itself.

Use only heavy-duty extension cords marked with a No. 14 gauge or larger wire.

If the heater plug has a grounding prong, use only a grounding (three wire) extension cord.

Never run the heater cord (or any cord) under rugs or carpeting.

Liquid Fuel-Powered Devices (kerosene or oilheat)

Never use gasoline or any other substitute fuel.

Allow the heater to cool down prior to refueling.

FIREPLACE **WOOD**

Regular cleaning will keep the fireplace free of obstructions and creosote. If you haven't had maintenance performed recently, use caution when operating the fireplace and never leave it unattended.

Make sure the damper is open.

Before use, inspect the chimney and fireplace area for debris and animals that could have taken up residence.

Maintain proper clearance around the fireplace and keep it clear of combustible materials such as books, newspapers and furniture.

Always close the screen when in use.

Keep glass doors open during the fire.

Use a fireplace grate.

Never burn garbage, rolled newspapers, charcoal or plastic in the fireplace.

Avoid using gasoline or any liquid accelerant.

Clean out ashes from previous fires and store them in a noncombustible container with a tight-fitting lid. Keep

the container outside and away from the house.

Make sure the fire is completely out before closing the damper.

GAS

Adjust the milli-volt output.

Keep the glowing embers and logs clean.

Inspect and clean the air circulation passages and fan.

Clean the glass as needed. Avoid obstructing the vents.

For more information about staying safe and warm during freezing weather, visit [disastersafety.org](https://www.disastersafety.org).