



Alternative Heating Equipment

AS ENERGY COSTS REACH RECORD HIGHS, many Americans are turning to alternative heating equipment, such as portable space heaters and wood-, pellet- or kerosene-burning stoves, to cut down costs. According to the Pellet Fuels Institute, approximately 800,000 U.S. homes use pellet stoves, which burn compressed wood by slowly feeding it from a storage container into a burn-pot area creating a constant flame.

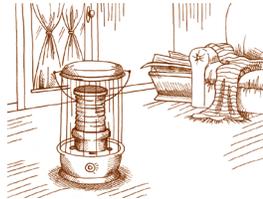
Fast Facts

- Most home heating fire deaths, injuries, and direct property damage involve stationary or portable space heaters.
- Gas-fueled heating devices, particularly space heaters, pose a higher risk of death due to carbon monoxide poisoning.
- Chimneys and chimney connectors account for the largest number of fires mostly because of failure to clean.
- One-third of space heater fires start when the heater is too close to something that could catch fire. Improper fueling is a particular problem for kerosene heaters.
- If the pilot light of your gas heater goes out, allow 5 minutes or more for the gas to go away before trying again, do not allow gas to accumulate, and light the match before you turn on the gas to the pilot to avoid risk of flashback.
- If you smell gas in your gas heater, do not attempt to light the appliance. Turn off all the controls and open doors and window. Call a gas service person.
- Install a carbon monoxide alarm in the home.

Safety Tips

Portable Electric Space Heaters

- Turn heaters off when you go to bed or leave the room.
- Use and purchase portable space heaters with an automatic shut off so if they're tipped over they will shut off.
- Place space heater on solid, flat surface at least three feet away from anything that can burn.
- Plug power cords directly into outlets and never into an extension cord.
- Inspect for cracked or damaged, broken plugs or loose connections. Replace before using.



Fuel-burning Space Heaters

- Always use the proper fuel as specified by the manufacturer.
- When refueling, allow the appliance to cool and refuel outside or in a well-ventilated area.
- When using the heater, open a window to ensure adequate venting.
- In portable kerosene or other liquid-fueled space heaters always use the proper grade of the proper fuel.
- All new unvented gas-fired space heaters have an oxygen depletion sensor that detects a reduced level of oxygen in the area where the heater is operating and shuts off the heater before a hazardous level of carbon monoxide accumulates. If you have an older heater without this feature, replace it.



Wood and Pellet-burning Stoves

- Install the stove, chimney connectors and chimneys following manufacturer's instructions or have a professional do the installation.
- Wood stoves should bear the label of a recognized testing laboratory.
- In wood stoves, burn only dry, seasoned wood. In pellet stoves, burn only dry, seasoned wood pellets.
- Start the fire with newspaper or kindling, never with a flammable liquid, such as lighter fluid, kerosene or gasoline.
- Keep the doors of your wood stove closed unless loading or stoking the live fire.
- Install a carbon monoxide alarm.
- Allow ashes to cool before disposing. Dispose of ashes in a tightly covered metal container and keep the ash container at least 10 feet away from the home and any other nearby buildings. Douse and saturate with water.



Fireplaces

- Have a sturdy screen on a fireplace.
- Burn only dry, seasoned wood.
- Chimneys and chimney connectors need to be cleaned and inspected at least once a year.
- Use artificial logs according to manufacturer's recommendations.
- Use only newspaper and kindling wood or fire starters to start a fire. Never use flammable liquids, such as lighter fluid, kerosene or gasoline to start a fire.

For home energy assistance, contact the National Energy Assistance Referral line at **1-866-674-6327**.

— *More Ways to Keep Your Community Safe and Warm* —

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