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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Contact: 315-386-2325

Heat Your Home Safely

Canton, NY—Brrr! Your home’s heating systems are working double time to keep you warm during these cold winter months. The St. Lawrence County Public Health Department wants residents to make safety their first priority, since heating is the second leading cause of home fires.

Please prevent a heating fire with these simple steps:

1. Install smoke alarms on every level, and inside and outside of all sleeping areas. Change the batteries at least once a year, and replace the alarm if it is more than 10 years old.
2. Keep anything that can burn at least three feet away from fireplaces, wood stoves, portable space heaters, and radiators. Remember skin burns too. Make sure pets and people stay 3 feet away.
3. Use portable space heaters that have an automatic shut-off switch so if they are tipped over, they will turn off on their own.
4. Plug only one portable space heater in an electrical outlet at one time. Do not use an extension cord or power strip. Place on a level, hard and nonflammable surface.
5. When leaving a room or going to bed, turn off space heaters.
6. Have your furnace, chimney, and chimney connector inspected and cleaned by a professional each winter.
7. Never use a cooking range or oven to heat your home.
8. Carbon monoxide is an invisible, odorless and silent killer that claims hundreds of lives each year in the U.S. When a carbon monoxide alarm sounds, treat the alert as a real emergency each time.
9. Symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning include headache, dizziness, weakness, nausea, vomiting, sleepiness and confusion.
10. If you suspect carbon monoxide poisoning, get to fresh air quickly, and then call 9-1-1.

Fire experts agree that you may have as little as two minutes to escape a home fire. You can help your family stay safe by practicing your escape plan at least twice a year until everyone can escape in two minutes or less.

And remember, test your smoke alarms monthly. Working smoke alarms can cut the risk of dying in a home fire by half.

For free fire safety resources, visit redcross.org/homefires or contact the St. Lawrence County Public Health Department at 315-386-2325 for additional information.

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