



Fireplaces

SafeTips from the Naval Safety Center

Quick and easy summaries to find out about something new you're doing or as a refresher for something you haven't done in a while. They're a great training tool to pass around at meetings, through e-mail, or post on bulletin boards.

More than one in three Americans use fireplaces, wood stoves and other fuel-burning appliances as the primary way to heat their homes. Many people are unaware of the fire risks when heating with wood and solid fuels. Heating fires account for 36 percent of residential home fires in rural areas every year. Often these fires are due to creosote buildup in chimneys and stovepipes.

Do's and Don'ts

- * Don't use gasoline to start a fire. Use paper, kindling and dry wood.
- * Use a screen to keep sparks from popping out of the fireplace.
- * Make sure that floor coverings and furniture are far enough away from the fireplace.
- * Make sure the flue is clean and open, and that the damper works. Open the damper before starting a fire.
- * Don't use your fireplace as an incinerator for trash.
- * Make sure the fire is out before you leave it alone or go to bed.
- * Dispose of ashes in a metal bucket or other metal container. Make sure they are cool.
- * Install smoke detectors and make sure they work.
- * Keep a 5-pound fire extinguisher on hand. It should be rated for A-B-C fires, and you should know how to use it.
- * Don't use water to extinguish a fire. It can crack the bricks in your hearth. Let the fire burn itself out.
- * When burning artificial logs, burn only one at a time. They produce too much concentrated heat for some types of fireplaces.
- * Have a chimney sweep inspect and clean your chimney at least once a year.

www.public.navy.mil/comnavsafecen/pages/media/index-safetips.aspx



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