



## **Heating Safety Tips From Brevard County Fire Rescue**

Did you know that heating equipment is one of the leading causes of home fires during the winter months? In fact, half of all home heating fires occur in December, January, and February. The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) estimates that heating equipment was involved in 66,100 reported home structure fires in 2008, resulting in 480 civilian deaths, 1,660 civilian injuries, and \$1.1 billion in direct property damage.

With record-setting cold descending on Brevard County in recent weeks, Brevard County Fire Rescue has already responded to a number of heating equipment related fires. Review the following safety tips to ensure that your family has a toasty but safe winter season.

- Keep a three-foot clearance between all heating equipment and anything that can burn.
- Do not use your oven to heat your home.
- Inspect and maintain heating equipment regularly for safety.
- Portable space heaters should be turned off every time you leave the room and before going to bed. Use and purchase portable space heaters with an automatic shut off so if they're tipped over they will shut off.
- When buying a new space heater, make sure it has the label showing it is listed by a recognized testing laboratory.
- Make sure your fireplace has a sturdy screen to prevent sparks from flying into the room. Allow ashes to cool before disposing them in a tightly covered metal container. Keep the ash container at least 10 feet away from the home and any other nearby buildings. Douse and saturate with water.
- Have heating equipment and chimneys inspected and cleaned every year.
- Install smoke alarms in every bedroom, outside each sleeping area and on every level of the home. For the best protection, interconnect all smoke alarms throughout the home. When one sounds, they all sound. Test smoke alarms monthly.
- Install and maintain carbon monoxide alarms to avoid risk of carbon monoxide poisoning.

Brevard County Fire Rescue is proud to serve your community. For more information on keeping warm safely this winter, visit [nfpa.org](http://nfpa.org) or call Brevard County Fire Rescue at 321-633-2056.