



Put a **FREEZE** on Winter Fires

Home fires occur more in winter than in any other season. As you stay cozy and warm this winter, be fire smart!



Half of all home heating fires occur in December, January and February.



1 in every 7 home fires and 1 in every 5 home fire deaths involves heating equipment.



Keep anything that can burn at least 3 feet from any heat source like fireplaces, wood stoves, radiators or space heaters.



Keep portable generators outside, away from windows, and as far away from your home as possible.



Install and test carbon monoxide alarms at least once a month.



Plug only 1 heat-producing appliance (like a space heater) into an electrical outlet at a time.



Have a qualified professional clean and inspect your chimney and vents every year.



Store cooled ashes in a tightly covered metal container, and keep it outside at least 10 feet from your home and any nearby buildings.

Did you know?

45, 

There are approximately **45,000** home electrical fires each year.

Did you know?



Half of all home electrical fires involve home wiring or lighting equipment.

Never use an extension cord with a heat-producing appliance.



Have an electrician install additional wall outlets where you need them.



Use light bulbs that match the recommended wattage on the lamp or fixture.

Winter Fire Safety

Portable Generators and Winter Storms



Portable generators are useful during winter storms, but if not used safely, they can cause injuries and death.

- ✔ Use portable generators outdoors in well-ventilated areas away from all doors, windows and vents.
- ✔ Make sure you have carbon monoxide alarms in your home.
- ✔ Do not use a generator in a wet area. This can cause shock or electrocution.
- ✔ Connect appliances to the generator with heavy-duty extension cords.
- ✔ Do not fuel your generator when it is running. Spilling gas on a hot engine can cause a fire.





360-Degree Kitchen Fire-Safety

This immersive 360-degree kitchen fire-safety video lets you choose where to look instead of just sitting back and watching. Look around our kitchen to find the fire hazards. Once you've found them, pan around to see how you can easily fix them and make your kitchen fire safe. (This video works with virtual reality (VR) headsets.)

COVID safety considerations

One of the most common coronavirus symptoms has reaffirmed the need for working smoke alarms in every home.

Each day USFA staff search the U.S. media to find home fire fatalities. Over the last several months we have seen many stories of people not being able to smell smoke in their home.

On January 15, a teenage girl, the only family member not suffering from coronavirus, smelled smoke and was able to get her family and pets out of the home safely.

Now is the time to remind your community about the importance of working smoke alarms. Smoke alarms not only provide an early warning of the fire, but if you are suffering from loss of smell, it may be the only warning you can depend upon.

Cardiac health = CRR

Is cardiac health a CRR issue? With February being American Heart Month, let's do a national Community Risk Assessment (CRA) and see...

- According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the leading cause of death, across the nation, is [cardiovascular disease \(CVD\)](#).
- Over 600,000 people die each year, 23% of all deaths.
- Someone dies from CVD every 50 seconds.
- It is the leading cause of death in just about every state.
- Minorities are disproportionately impacted.
- Over half of firefighter fatalities in 2019 were CVD, according to [USFA](#).

Let's put it in perspective...

- Each year approximately 3,000 people die from fires.
- For every person that dies in a fire, 200 people are killed from CVD.
- If you overlay a map of high-risk CVD states it aligns almost perfectly with high-risk fire death states.
- About 70 to 80% of emergency calls are EMS-related.
- Not every community has had a fatal fire, but it is probably safe to say that every community has had people die from CVD.

So back to looking at our CRA, if we want to truly have an impact on the health and well-being of our communities, both inside and outside of the fire department, in an area where we can make a significant difference, it can be promoting cardiac health by getting ahead of the call. It can be helping people after an event, when they return home from the hospital. A number of communities are doing this as part of a community paramedicine program or mobile integrated health programs.

A great example of this is what Harris County Emergency Services District #48 is doing in Texas where they meet with the patients in the hospital before they are discharged to start them on the road to recovery and back to a normal life. Battalion Chief Joseph Casciotti spoke on this at the Vision 20/20 Model Performance in CRR Symposium. You can review his [presentation](#) and listen to him explain the program on [CRR Radio](#).

And if you are looking for resources to help you in your community outreach during American Heart Month, the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute has a number of [free tools](#).

High-Rise Apartment and Condominium Fire Safety

Fires in high-rise and condominium buildings are especially dangerous. Make sure you know where all the exit stairs are in your building. If you do have a fire in your building, here are steps you can take to stay safe.

Know how to escape in an emergency:

If you cannot get out of your apartment because of fire, smoke or if you have a disability:



LEAVE your apartment. Close the door behind you.

CALL 911 and tell them where you are. It may take a while for the fire department to clear the building. Stay on the phone with the fire department to help them locate you.

PULL the fire alarm on your way out to notify the fire department and your neighbors.

OPEN a window slightly and place a bright cloth outside to signal your location. Close the window so the air does not pull smoke into your room.

USE the stairs to get out. Do not use the elevator unless directed by the fire department.

GO to your outside meeting place and stay there. Call the fire department. If someone is trapped in the building, let the fire department know.

APARTMENTS

Visit [usfa.fema.gov](https://www.usfa.fema.gov) for more free fire-safety resources.