



city of
greenville

News Release

GREENVILLE CITY FIRE DEPARTMENT WARNS OF DANGERS ASSOCIATED WITH HEATING SOURCES

(Greenville SC) On Wednesday, the Greenville City Fire Department (GCFD) responded to a home fire that was caused when a resident accidentally knocked over a kerosene heater. While no one was injured, fire officials say it is a perfect and all too common example of how dangerous heating sources such as portable and stationary space heaters can be. According to the U.S. Fire Administration, heating is the second leading cause of home fires. According to Will Broschious, GCFD's community risk reduction coordinator, the good news is that fire deaths can be reduced by teaching people the basic facts about fire. That is the goal of Fire Is Everyone's Fight™, a national initiative designed to unite the fire service, life safety organizations and professionals in an effort to reduce home fire injuries, deaths and property loss by changing how people think about fire and fire prevention.

Facts about home heating fires:

- From 2010-2012, an average of 45,200 home heating fires occurred in the United States each year and resulted in an annual average of approximately 155 deaths, 625 injuries and \$351 million in property loss
- Home heating fires peaked in the early evening hours between 5 and 9 p.m. with the highest peak between 6 and 8 p.m. This four-hour period accounted for 30% of all home heating fires.
- Home heating fires peaked in January (21%) and declined to the lowest point during the summer months from June to August
- Confined fires, those fires confined to chimneys, flues or fuel burners, accounted for 84% of home heating fires
- 29% of the nonconfined home heating fires occurred because the heat source was too close to things that can burn

“With the Upstate experiencing bitter temperatures, some people are using whatever means they can to stay warm,” said Broschious. “As a result, we are urging residents to follow the heating safety

tips below, and to check on friends, neighbors and the elderly, who may be vulnerable to fire-related tragedy.”

Space & Kerosene Heaters

- Keep anything that can burn, such as bedding, clothing and curtains, at least 3 feet away from the heater
- Make sure the heater has an automatic shut-off, so if it tips over, it shuts off
- Turn heaters off when you go to bed or leave the room
- Plug portable heaters directly into outlets and never into an extension cord or power strip
- Only use heaters from a recognized testing laboratory
- Refuel your cooled heater outside

Fireplaces & Wood Stoves

- Keep a glass or metal screen in front of the fireplace to prevent embers or sparks jumping out
- Do not burn paper in your fireplace or wood stove
- Put the fire out before you go to sleep or leave your home
- Put ashes in a metal container with a lid, outside, at least 3 feet from your home

For more information about fire safety, contact Will Broscius at 467-5753 (o), 631-4316 (c) or wbroscious@greenvillesc.gov.