



United States Fire
Administration

FIIGHT FIRE

For more information on how you can help prevent fire deaths please contact your local fire department on a nonemergency number or the United States Fire Administration at (800) 238-3358 or www.usfa.fema.gov

WINTER FIRES

WITH FACTS

Recently your community was struck by fire. Someone died. As you continue to report about the devastating effects of this fire, the U.S. Fire Administration (USFA) encourages you to remind your audience that many fire deaths and injuries are preventable.

More than 4,000 Americans die each year in fires and more than 25,000 are injured. Many of them might be alive today if they had only had the information they needed to avoid a disaster.

The following life-saving tips could make a big difference to your audience. By incorporating them in your story now, while the moment is still fresh, you could help save a life.

Did you know?

- *Eighty percent of all fire deaths occur in the home.*
- *Electrical fires are a special concern during the winter months which call for more indoor activities and increases in lighting, heating and appliance safety.*
- *Deaths caused by winter fires are particularly avoidable.*

Following these simple fire safety tips can boost survival rates dramatically. Please share them with your readers because knowledge is the best fire protection.

WINTER FIRES

LIFE-SAVING TIPS

- 1 Make sure your space heaters have an emergency shut off in case they tip over. **ONLY** use the fuel recommended by the manufacturer. Never refill a space heater while it is operating or still hot. Refuel outside, away from the house.
- 2 Make sure wood stoves are properly installed, away from combustible surfaces, have the proper floor support and adequate ventilation. Never use flammable liquids (such as gasoline) to start or accelerate fire.
- 3 Have your furnace and chimney professionally inspected annually and cleaned if necessary. Chimney tar build-up is a common cause of chimney fires.
- 4 Use a glass or metal screen in front of your fireplace to prevent sparks from igniting nearby carpets or furniture.
- 5 Never thaw frozen pipes with a blow torch or other open flame. Use hot water or a UL listed device such as a hand held dryer.
- 6 Dispose of hot ashes in metal containers placed away from the house.
- 7 Don't use the oven to heat your home. In addition to being a fire hazard, it can be a source of toxic fumes.
- 8 If there is a fire hydrant near your home, keep it clear of snow for easy access.
- 9 Install a smoke alarm on every level of your home. Test the batteries every month and change them at least once a year.