



# Fast Facts You Should Know About Home Heating Fires

- On average, U.S. fire departments respond to almost 70,000 home<sup>1</sup> structure fires that involve heating equipment each year. These fires cause on average each year:
  - roughly 600 deaths
  - more than 1,600 civilian fire injuries
  - almost \$900 million in direct property damage
- Half of all home heating fires occur in December, January and February.
- Heating equipment is involved in one in six home fires and fire deaths.
- Space heaters, excluding fireplaces, chimneys, and chimney connectors, are involved in one third of the home heating fires but four of every five home heating fire deaths. A space heater can be portable or stationary. Space heaters include wood stoves, portable kerosene heaters, electric heaters, fixed and portable electric or gas heaters, local furnaces and fireplace inserts.
- Half of home heating fire deaths were caused by fires that started because the heating equipment was too close to things that could burn, such as upholstered furniture, clothing, and mattresses or bedding.
- Improper fueling is a particular problem for kerosene heaters.
- Fireplaces, chimneys and chimney connectors account for the largest share of home heating fire incidents. Creosote build-up is the leading cause of chimney fires.
- Gas-fueled heating devices, particularly space heaters, pose a higher risk of death due to non-fire carbon monoxide poisoning than other heating equipment.
- Central heating of all types pose a much lower risk of fire and associated losses, relative to usage, than do space heaters.



<sup>1</sup>Homes are dwellings, duplexes, manufactured homes, apartments, townhouses, rowhouses and condominiums.