



NEWS RELEASE

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Contact: TVF&R Public Information Officer, 503-441-9324 (pager)

TVF&R Responds to Chimney Fire - Reminds You to Check Your Chimney

Tualatin Valley Fire and Rescue firefighters responded to one of the first chimney fires of the season today. Residents of the home at 14335 SW 125TH AV in Tigard called 9-1-1 reporting that smoke was in the house and they were evacuating. Luckily for the family who lives in the home, firefighters were able to extinguish the fire before it caused serious damage.

As temperatures begin to drop and people start to use their furnaces and fireplaces, TVF&R firefighters say that now is the perfect time to have your furnaces and chimney flues inspected, change the filters on your heaters, and move furniture that may have been pushed up against wall and baseboard heaters.

Heating equipment, including fireplaces, is a leading cause of residential fires and fire deaths each year.

TVF&R recommends that you inspect your chimney flue for creosote build-up and have it cleaned if necessary. Creosote is a shiny, highly flammable material that coats your chimney flue. When enough creosote is present, it only takes a spark to ignite and cause a chimney fire.

Also, take the following steps:

- Install a tight-fitting fireplace screen and never leave your fire unattended.
- Keep combustibles at least 3 feet away.
- Use caution when disposing of fireplace ashes. Allow ashes to cool completely by waiting two to three days before cleaning out your fireplace or woodstove. If you cannot wait to clean out your fireplace or woodstove, place ashes outside in a metal container with a lid.

What about space heaters?

Space heaters need space! Keep combustibles (furniture, bedding, towels) at least 3 feet away.

Use only heaters with Underwriter's Laboratory (UL) safety listing and ensure they have "tip-over" safety switch.

Keep portable heaters out of travel paths.

Baseboard heaters – Some models do not allow the heater to turn off completely and they automatically turn on when temperatures drop below a certain temperature in the home. Move furniture, bedding, etc. that has been placed in front of over the summer.

For more about how to stay safe this winter, visit <http://www.tvfr.com/> and click on "Safety Tips."

