



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: December 6, 2024

SARATOGA COUNTY OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PROVIDES FIRE SAFETY TIPS FOR THE WINTER MONTHS

BALLSTON SPA, NY -- Following multiple structure fires in Saratoga County, the county Office of Emergency Management provides fire safety tips to help residents to prioritize fire safety in their homes as temperatures drop and winter settles in.

Heating equipment, holiday decorations, and an increase in indoor activities during the colder months all contribute to a higher risk of fires. Following a few simple precautions can help protect your home and loved ones this winter season.

Michael Stanley, Deputy Director and Fire Coordinator for the Saratoga County Office of Emergency Management said, "Over the last few weeks, we have seen an uptick in the number of fires within the county. Working smoke detectors are crucial for early fire detection. They give you precious time to escape safely and are essential in waking you up should a fire occur when you are asleep. Don't wait until it is too late. Make sure you have working smoke detectors installed today and take these additional precautions to reduce the risk of fires to ensure a safe winter for you and your loved ones."

Top Winter Fire Safety Tips

Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Detectors:

- Test smoke and carbon monoxide alarms monthly.
- Replace batteries twice a year, or immediately if the alarm chirps.
- Install alarms at every level of your home, inside bedrooms, and outside sleeping areas.

Heating Equipment:

- Keep all flammable materials, like furniture, curtains, and bedding, at least three feet away from space heaters, fireplaces, and wood stoves.
- Always turn off portable heaters when leaving a room or going to bed.
- Have your heating system, chimneys, and vents professionally inspected and cleaned annually.

(more)

Holiday Decorations:

- Use flame-resistant or flame-retardant decorations.
- Check holiday lights for frayed wires or broken bulbs and replace them if damaged.
- Never leave lit candles unattended; use battery-operated candles as a safer alternative.
- Keep live Christmas trees secure in a sturdy stand and sufficiently watered.

Fireplace Safety:

- Use a sturdy screen to prevent sparks and embers from escaping.
- Allow ashes to cool before disposing of them in a metal container, stored at least 10 feet from your home.

Emergency Preparedness:

- Create and practice a home fire escape plan with your family.
- Ensure all exits are clear and accessible in case of an emergency.
- Keep a fire extinguisher in your home and know how to use it.

For more information about fire safety and prevention, visit www.saratogacountyny.gov/OEM.

###