Prepare Now to Use Central Heating Systems Safely

Olympia – The State Fire Marshal’s Office recommends taking some time now to prepare for colder weather. Here are a few tips to keep your heating system running safely and efficiently:

- Furnaces should be inspected, cleaned, and serviced every year by a qualified, licensed professional to ensure safe and reliable operation.
- Keep any flammable materials at least 3 feet away from the furnace to reduce the risk of ignition.
- If the pilot light of your gas furnace goes out, allow 5 minutes or more for the gas to clear. Then, follow the manufacturer’s instructions for relighting the pilot.
- If you smell gas in or around your gas furnace that does not dissipate, do not try to relight it. Evacuate and call 9-1-1.
- Keep exterior venting clear of snow, ice, and other debris to reduce the risk of carbon monoxide accumulation inside the home.
- Install and maintain smoke alarms inside your home to alert you to fire danger.
- Install and maintain carbon monoxide (CO) alarms inside your home to alert you in case of carbon monoxide accumulation.
- Develop and practice a home escape plan.

For more information, contact the State Fire Marshal’s Office at (360) 596-3929.

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