Keeping Floyd Safe

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COLD WEATHER SAFETY TIPS FROM THE FLOYD COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

The one of the leading causes of home fire deaths may unsuspectedly be in your bedroom, living room, child's room… The culprit? Heating equipment. Heating equipment is the #2 cause of home fire deaths. Half of all annual home heating equipment fires are reported in December, January, and February. In 2010, it was reported that home fires claimed the lives of 7 people daily. The Floyd Sheriff's Office wants to keep you and your family from being a statistic! Below are a few simple steps from the **National Fire Protection Association** (NFPA), found at www.nfpa.org, which can prevent most heating-related fires from happening.

- Keep anything that can burn at least three feet away from heating equipment, like the furnace, fireplace, wood stove, or portable space heater.
- Have a three-foot "kid-free zone" around open fires and space heaters.
- Never use your oven to heat your home.
- Have a qualified professional install stationary space heating equipment, water heaters or central heating equipment according to the local codes and manufacturer's instructions.
- Have heating equipment and chimneys cleaned and inspected every year by a qualified professional.
- Remember to turn portable heaters off when leaving the room or going to bed.
- Always use the right kind of fuel, specified by the manufacturer, for fuel burning space heaters.

- Make sure the fireplace has a sturdy screen to stop sparks from flying into the room. Ashes should be cool before putting them in a metal container. Keep the container a safe distance away from your home.
- Test smoke alarms monthly. Roughly two-thirds of home fire deaths happen in homes with no smoke alarms or no working. About one in five smoke alarm failures was due to dead batteries.