



Humboldt Bay Fire News Release

533 C St.
Eureka, CA 95501
(707) 441-4000



Smoke Alarms Save Lives.

10/20/2020

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Subject : Home Heating Safety

Contact : Amy Conlin, Community Risk Reduction Specialist, 707-601-6724

This past weekend Humboldt Bay Fire responded to a fire caused by combustible materials placed on top of a floor heater, an unfortunately common occurrence locally during the cooler months.

As we move toward Winter and thermostats drop, heaters begin to kick on and pose a fire risk. Humboldt Bay Fire historically responds to several heater-related fires at this time of year.

Residents may believe a furnace is off because they have adjusted the thermostat to the lowest setting, but this action alone does not disable the furnace. When the temperature falls below the lowest setting on the thermostat, the heater will still turn on. Combustibles such as rugs placed on or near the heater can ignite and start a fire.

Fortunately, no one was injured in the fire this weekend and early notification and arrival of HBF personnel limited the damage. This is due to the fact that a properly operating smoke detector sounded and alerted neighbors to the fire in the apartment. Heater fires have the potential to cause major damage to a home. Use the tips below to prevent a heater fire, and ensure you have working smoke detectors in your home in case a fire does occur:

- Do not place floor coverings, clothing, or furniture over floor furnaces or in front of wall heaters.
- Move combustibles away from all types of heaters including floor, wall, and

in forced-air heater closets.

- Have your furnace cleaned and serviced to ensure safe and efficient operation.
- Inspect the walls and ceiling near the furnace or heater; If the wall is hot to the touch or discolored, stop using it and have the appliance checked by a qualified technician.
- If you heat with wood, move combustibles at least 36" away from the stove or fireplace. This applies to furniture as well.
- Never discard hot ashes inside or near the home or on a wooden deck. Place ashes in a metal container outside and well away from the house or other buildings.
- Have your stove pipe, chimney, or flue cleaned and inspected prior to use.

2020 has brought enough turmoil this year; Join Humboldt Bay Fire in avoiding furnace, heater, and woodstove fires this season!

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