

Home Heating Safety

Facts & Figures*

Heating equipment is the leading cause of home fires during the months of December, January and February, and trails only cooking equipment in home fires year-round.

- In 2006, heating equipment was involved in an estimated 64,100 reported U.S. home structure fires, with associated losses of 540 civilian deaths, 1,400 civilian injuries, and \$943 million in direct property damage. Heating equipment related fires accounted for 16% of all reported home fires (second behind cooking) and nearly 21% of home fire deaths.
- All types of common [space heating](#) equipment are involved in home fires: portable electric heaters, portable kerosene heaters, wood stoves, fireplaces with inserts and room gas heaters were involved in 26% of the home heating fires but 73% of the deaths.
- Excluding small confined fires, heating equipment too close to things that can burn, such as upholstered furniture, clothing, mattresses, or bedding, is by far the leading factor contributing to home heating fires (28%) and home heating fire deaths (43%).
- Chimneys and chimney connectors accounted for the largest share (in 2006) of home heating fire incidents. Failure to clean accounted for over half (60%) of the confined chimney and chimney connector fires.
- Common causes of space heating home fires are: lack of regular cleaning, leading to creosote build-up, in wood-burning devices and associated chimneys and connectors; failing to give space heaters space, by installing or placing them too close to combustibles; basic flaws in the construction or design of wood burning heating equipment; and fueling errors involving liquid- or gas-fueled heating equipment.

