**January**

**Week 1- Carbon Monoxide Hazards:**

Carbon Monoxide (CO) is a gas you cannot see, taste, or smell. This is how it got it’s nickname ‘The Invisible Killer”. Improperly vented heating appliances cause CO poisoning in most cases. Some symptoms include a headache, nausea, and drowsiness.

The easiest and most effective way to avoid CO poisoning is to install CO alarms in your house. Travel CO alarms are also available when you’re staying anywhere that might not have them. The most effective way to use CO alarms is to have them interconnected, which means when one sounds they all will sound.

In the garage, make sure all vehicles are driven out immediately after being started. Even if the garage doors are open, this is still not safe**.**

**If your alarm sounds:**

**1. Move to a fresh air location outdoors.**

**2. Call 9-1-1.**

**3. Remain in the fresh air location until emergency personnel arrive to assist you.**

**Week 2- Heating Safety: Space Heaters:**

Heating equipment is the leading cause of home fire deaths. About half of those fires are reported during the months of December, January, and February. These very simple steps can prevent most heating related fires from happening:

**1. Have a 3-foot “ kid-free-zone” around fires and space heaters.**

**2. Keep anything that can burn at least 3-feet away from any heating equipment.**

**3. Never use ovens or stoves as heating devices. They are not designed for heating households.**

The two most common space heaters are portable electric space heaters and fuel-burning space heaters. The most common mistake that causes heating appliance related fires is thinking these two types have the same safety regulations.

When purchasing a portable electric space heater make sure it is listed by a qualified testing lab and has an automatic shut off. Anytime your leave the room, the heater needs to be turned off. All heaters should be placed on a flat, solid surface. Heaters should be plugged directly into wall outlets, and not into an extension cord. Do not plug anything else into the same circuit as your heater; doing so can cause overheating. If the heater plug doesn’t fit snuggly into the outlet, do not plug it in and get an electrician to replace your wall outlet to prevent overheating as well.

When using a fuel-burning space heater be sure to only use the fuel as specified from the manufacturer. Only refuel outside, into a cooled down appliance. Keep a window open while the appliance is on to ensure proper ventilation. When purchasing, make sure your heater has an oxygen depletion sensor, this detects when oxygen levels in the area are reducing and the heater should be shut off. If there is a smell of gas in your heater, do not light it. Leave the building and call 9-1-1 and the gas company immediately.

**Week 3- Pet Fire Safety:**

If you have pets you know how much pet owners love their animals. As much as nobody wants to admit it, pets can be dangerous too. Pets and wild animals have a part in starting about 700 home fires a year. Some easy ways to keep your home and pets safe:

**1. Keep your pets away from stoves and countertops.**

**2. Keep your pets away from candles, lamps, and space heaters.**

**3. Always keep your metal or heat-tempered glass screens on your fireplace.**

**4. Keep a 3-feet “pet –free zone” around your fireplace.**

**5. Keep pets away from outside chimney vents.**

**6. Consider battery-operated, flameless candles. They can look and smell like real candles.**

**7. Watch your pets to make sure they don’t chew through electrical cords. If they do, get the problem checked by a professional.**

Preparing for a fire is preventing a fire. Having pets can cause your mindset about escaping a fire to differ than a non-pet owner’s mindset. It is important that if your smoke alarms sound for you to escape the house. Do not go back in for your pets. If your pet is trapped, let the firefighter know. It is also important to build an evacuation kit for each pet in your household. Each kit should be lightweight and easy to load into a vehicle when packing to evacuate.

**Week 4- Manufactured Home Safety-**

Manufactured homes are transportable structures that are fixed to chassis and specifically designed to be towed to a residential site. They are not the same as modular or prefabricated homes. These types of homes are required to have smoke alarms by HUD (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development) standards.

When in the market for a manufactured home, make sure it is HUD-certified. Most manufactured homes built after 1976 are. Test your smoke alarms monthly to ensure they are in working condition. Make sure you have enough smoke alarms in or near every sleeping room and family or living room. You should have a plan for escape if a fire were to occur with at least 2 different escape routes.