



Rapid City--Pennington County
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For Immediate Release

Put a Freeze on Winter Fires

As we move closer to winter, and home fires begin to increase, the [U.S. Fire Administration](#) (USFA) and the [National Fire Protection Association](#) (NFPA) are reminding individuals and communities that [fire safety](#) awareness and efforts are especially important in the coming months. To support this effort, the USFA and NFPA are sponsoring a special initiative - *Put a Freeze on Winter Fires* – to help get the word out about home fire safety.

Each winter, an estimated 108,400 home fires occur in the United States, resulting in approximately 945 deaths and \$1.7 billion in property loss. Cooking is the leading cause of winter home fires, and holiday decorations and winter storms can cause people to turn to alternative heating sources, such as space heaters, which account for about one third of home heating fires and approximately 80 percent of home heating fire deaths.

Winter fires can be prevented! The following fire safety tips can help maintain a fire-safe home this winter season:

- Stay in the kitchen when cooking something on top of the stove or when grilling or broiling food.
- Keep anything that can burn at least three feet away from space heaters, woodstoves, etc.
- Replace damaged electrical or extension cords.
- Never use the oven or stovetop to heat a home; carbon monoxide gas can kill people and pets.
- Don't put a live Christmas tree up too early or leave it up for longer than two weeks. Keep the tree stand filled with water.
- Avoid using lighted candles; try flameless candles instead.

For more information, visit the [USFA Web site](#) and the [NFPA Web site](#).