

# SHORT TERM RENTAL COMPLIANCE CHECKLIST



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## OVERVIEW

Is your rental property compliant with Town of Beech Mountain Code of Ordinances? As listed in the Code, there are several requirements that all Short-Term Rental properties (STRs) must adhere to. Many of these requirements are in place to ensure the life safety of any occupant wishing to rent your property. If you are an STR owner, please review the following checklist to ensure you are compliant with the Ordinances. If you have questions or need assistance, please contact Town Hall at (828) 387-4236.

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## CHECKLIST

- Property Rental Affidavit of Compliance – Due January 1<sup>st</sup> every year
- Occupancy Tax Listing Form – Due May 30<sup>th</sup> and November 30<sup>th</sup> every year
- Occupancy Tax Monthly Report – Due by the 15<sup>th</sup> of every month
- Bear Resistant Trash Receptacle OR Use of Dumpster at Multi-Family Complex
- Operable Smoke Alarms as Required by Building Code
- Operable Carbon Monoxide Alarms as Required by Building Code
- Operable and Inspected Fire Extinguishers as Required by Fire Code
- Landline Telephone
- 911 Address Visible from All Directions at Street

# RENTAL AFFIDAVIT OF COMPLIANCE



Chapters 50, 90 and 95 of Beech Mountain Code of Ordinances require Automatic Smoke Detectors, Fire Extinguishers, Carbon Monoxide Alarms, Landline Telephone and Metal Bear Resistant Trash Bin in all Rental Residential Dwelling Units within the Town of Beech Mountain, NC

I, the undersigned, being the (please check one)  
owners(s) of the property listed below  
agent of the owner(s) of property listed below

Do hereby certify under penalties of perjury that the property listed below is in compliance with Chapters 50, 90 and 95 of the Beech Mountain Code of Ordinances and that the following is true:

- (1) The dwelling has a minimum of one fire extinguisher complying with the North Carolina State Fire Code, Section 906, with a minimum 2-A, 10BC rating, properly hung and displayed on each living level.
- (2) Smoke detectors are installed on each living level, outside each sleeping area, and in each sleeping room in accordance with the North Carolina State Building Code.
- (3) Carbon Monoxide detectors are installed outside each sleeping area in the immediate vicinity of the bedrooms in accordance with the North Carolina State Building Code.
- (4) A landline telephone capable of dialing 911 despite power outages.
- (5) Extinguishers, smoke detectors, and carbon monoxide detectors were inspected and tested on \_\_\_\_\_ and found to be in operable condition.
- (6) Metal bear resistant trash bin.

Property Address: \_\_\_\_\_

(If additional space is needed, please continue to the reverse side or provide attached sheet listing all the properties you manage/own.)

I agree that the Town of Beech Mountain may inspect such properties to ensure compliance.

Date

Printed Name

Signature

## Certification of Notary Public

STATE OF \_\_\_\_\_

COUNTY OF \_\_\_\_\_

I, a Notary Public, do hereby certify that \_\_\_\_\_ personally appeared before me this day and acknowledged the due execution of the foregoing instrument. Witness my hand and official seal.

This the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_\_.

Notary Public \_\_\_\_\_

(official seal)

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

My Commission Expires \_\_\_\_\_

# OWNER OCCUPANCY TAX FORM



TO BE FILED EACH MAY 30 AND NOVEMBER 30

In accordance with Part XIV, Section 2 (c) of Senate Bill 92, please provide the following information:

Owner's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Owner's Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Rental Property Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Beech Mountain, NC 28604

By listing this property, you are indicating that it is AVAILABLE for rent. Please indicate how the property may be rented.

**Check one:**

\_\_\_\_\_ Short-term (Daily, weekly, etc.)

\_\_\_\_\_ Long-Term (rented or leased for 90 or more consecutive days to the same person)

\_\_\_\_\_ NOT available for rent this listing period

how will this property's occupancy tax be submitted:

**Check one:**

\_\_\_\_\_ Air BNB

\_\_\_\_\_ Yourself

\_\_\_\_\_ Vrbo

\_\_\_\_\_ (insert other renting company)

# OCCUPANCY TAX FORM



TO BE FILED WITHIN 15 DAYS FROM THE CLOSE OF EACH

For the Month of \_\_\_\_\_

BUSINESS NAME (if operated at such): \_\_\_\_\_

NAME OF OWNER: \_\_\_\_\_

MAILING ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\* Number Of Nights Rented During the Month: \_\_\_\_\_ \*\*\*

Computation of Occupancy Tax	Watauga 6% of Gross Rec.	Avery 6% of Gross Rec.
1. Gross Retail Receipts (excludes any tax)		
2. Less: Non-occupancy Related Receipts		
3. Less: Occupancy Receipts Not Subject to Sales Tax		
4. Less: Occupancy Receipts After 90 <sup>th</sup> Consecutive Day		
5. Credit on Previously Charged Exempt Receipts		
6. Net Retail Receipts		
<b>Total of Occupancy Tax Due</b>		
7. Total Tax (6% of line 6)		
8. Penalty		
9. Total amount Due		
<b>Total Amount Remitted</b>		

Certification: This is to certify that this report, including all statements and schedules attached hereto, has been examined by me, and is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, a true and complete report made in good faith covering the month named above and that the same is in accordance with the records of the reporting taxpayer.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## OCCUPANCY TAX REPORT INSTRUCTIONS

1. Reports must be filed on or before the fifteenth of the month following the month in which the tax accrues. "On time" reports must be either hand delivered no later than 5:00 p.m. on the 15th or bear a U.S. Postal Service postmark no later than the 15th. When the 15th falls on either a Saturday, Sunday or legal holiday, the report and tax is then due the next business day. Tax shown to be due should be paid with the return; penalties will be imposed for late filing/late payment.
2. **"Nonoccupancy Related Receipts"** (Line 2) are those receipts from retail sales that are not derived from "rentals of any sleeping room or lodging furnished." "Room" is defined as a partitioned part of the inside of a building designed or used as a lodging, includes suites or rooms which have, in one or more rooms or areas, sleeping accommodations, whether or not actually used by the occupants.
3. **"Occupancy Receipts Not Subject to Sales Tax"** (Line 3) are those receipts for which the hotel, motel, or inn did not collect a sales tax due to statutory exemption.
4. **"Occupancy Receipts After 90th Consecutive Day"** (Line 4) are those receipts derived from the rental of a room to the same person for that portion of the continuous rental of the room after the ninetieth (90) consecutive day of rental.
5. "Credits on Previously Charged Exempt Receipts" (Line 5) are available upon documentation of tax paid on retail receipts that were from room rentals to the same person for days 1-89 in a rental of 90 consecutive days or more and were included in gross receipts in prior month's reports.
6. **"Penalty"** (Line 8) for Late Filing of the tax return is 5% of the amount of tax due and an additional 5% per month or fraction thereof if more than one month late, with a maximum of 25% and a minimum of \$5.00, and a Failure to Pay penalty of 10% of the tax with a minimum \$5.00. A zero report is required when there is no tax to report. Zero reports may be faxed to the Town in lieu of mailing them. For seasonal business, reports may be filed in advance for months not in operation. Zero reports may be faxed in at the number on the front of this form.
7. Remittance should be made by check payable to **The Town of Beech Mountain**
8. Return this completed report with remittance to:  
Beech Mountain Tax Administrator  
403 Beech Mountain Parkway  
Beech Mountain, NC 28604
9. Direct inquires to the Tax Administrator at (828) 387-4236.

The Town of Beech Mountain began levying an Occupancy Tax on July 14, 1987 in accordance with Chapter 376 of the 1987 Session Laws of the North Carolina General Assembly. During the 2001 Session, the North Carolina General Assembly enacted legislation that repealed the 1987 act and authorized the Town of Beech Mountain to levy a new room occupancy and tourism development tax. This new tax began being levied effective February 1, 2002 in accordance with Senate Bill 92 (February 7, 2001) and House Bill 685 (March 19, 2001) increased the rate for rental property located within Watauga County effective April 1, 2002. Later, Senate Bill 1195 (August 28, 2002) authorized the Town to increase the rate for property located in Avery County, effective July 1, 2003. The end result - the Town of Beech Mountain levies a total of 6% Occupancy Tax on short term rentals.

"The Town of Beech Mountain shall levy a room occupancy tax . . . [on] the gross receipts derived from the rental of any room, lodging, or similar accommodation furnished by a hotel, motel, inn, or similar place within the corporate limits of the town that is subject to sales tax imposed by the State of North Carolina under G.S. 105-164.4(3). (G.S. 105-164.4(3) states that the tax shall not apply to any room or rooms, lodging or accommodations supplied to the same person for a period of 90 continuous days or more). This tax is in addition to any state or local sales tax. This tax does not apply to accommodations furnished by nonprofit charitable, educational, or religious organizations."

A room occupancy tax return is not public record and may not be disclosed except in accordance with NCGS 153A-148.1 or NCGS 160A-208.1.

# STR BEAR RESISTANT TRASH RECEPTACLE INFORMATION



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## PERTINENT SOLID WASTE REGULATIONS FROM CHAPTER 50

### § 50.11 RECEPTACLES; PREPARATION OF SOLID WASTE.

- (j) All residential vacation rentals operating within the town are required to utilize and maintain in good working order a bear resistant container or containers, as described in § 50.12(B), on the premises used for such rental adequate to hold the amount of waste generated by the property. This requirement shall not apply to multi-family structures, where adequate solid waste receptacles are otherwise provided.

### § 50.12 SOLID WASTE BIN SPECIFICATIONS.

- (B) Residential bear resistant waste bin specification. In the alternative to the receptacle standards set forth herein, a property owner may elect to utilize a bear resistant solid waste container. A solid waste container is approved as bear resistant if:
  - (1) The receptacle is specifically designed and marketed by its manufacturer as being bear proof or bear resistant by virtue of containing qualities and features specifically designed to prevent bears from accessing its contents.
  - (2) The receptacle is approved by the Town Manager or his or her designee as having sufficient bear resistant qualities or features; or
  - (3) The receptacle is certified as bear resistant by the Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee. Any bear resistant solid waste container shall meet or exceed the following minimum standards or an approved equivalent:
    - (a) Sheet metal components shall be 14-gauge steel;
    - (b) Metal frame components shall be 1/8" x 1 1/2";
    - (c) Expanded metal components shall be 1/2" - #13;
    - (d) Hinges shall be capable of supporting the required loads;
    - (e) All structural components shall be welded together;
    - (f) All exposed metal shall be painted with multiple coats of neutral or earth-toned epoxy paint to protect the structure from corrosion;
    - (g) No sharp edges shall be present, which may poke, slice, or otherwise injure town staff accessing the container;
    - (h) Enclosures shall be capable of holding two standard 35-gallon containers; and
    - (i) Containers shall not exceed 60" wide by 54" tall by 30" deep, without prior written approval.
  - (4) Bins shall have a "mailbox flag," visible from the road, for notifying town personnel when pickup is necessary.

# Address Posting Checklist

## Code Requirements

- Numbers must be visible from the road while traveling in both directions.
  - Numbers may be located on the house, if visible and legible from both directions.
  - Numbers may be located on the mailbox or on a post, if located on the same side of the road as the house.
  - Numbers must not be obscured by vegetation or other visual barriers.
- Numbers must be a minimum of 3 inches in height.
  - Numbers may be larger and may need to be larger if located on the house away from the street.
- Numbers must contrast with the background where they are mounted.
  - Generally, dark numbers on a light background or vice versa.
- Numbers must be reflective.
  - The easiest way to achieve this is with reflective adhesive numbers available at most hardware stores.
  - Decorative address signs may be used in conjunction with this but not as a substitute unless they are reflective, contrasting, and a minimum of 3" tall.

## Compliant Options

### Full-Service Custom

The people at **Bearicade** are offering a compliant address posting service including fabrication and installation of the address posting as a complete service. Contact them at their office number **(828) 964-5404** for pricing.

### Custom Sign

There are several sign companies locally that are able to fabricate reflective address signs that are compliant with the ordinance requirements: **Appalachian Sign Co.**; **Go Postal in Boone**; **High Country Signs**; and others

### DIY Options

There are several do-it-yourself options for achieving compliance. Most are available at local general stores and hardware stores:

Reflective Numbers 3" or larger



Reflective Address Sign Kits:





# Fire Safety at Your Home Away from Home

Peer-to-peer hospitality services, such as Airbnb, Vacation Rentals by Owner and other types of vacation rentals are not regulated in the same way as hotels. Requirements vary widely across jurisdictions. Act as your own safety advocate and know before you go. Be sure the following safety measures are addressed.

## SAFETY TIPS

- ✓ Working smoke alarms are in every sleeping room. They are outside each separate sleeping area. They are on every level of the home.
- ✓ Working smoke alarms are interconnected, if possible. When one alarm sounds, they all sound.
- ✓ Portable fire extinguishers are in the home and are easy to reach.
- ✓ Working carbon monoxide alarms are outside each separate sleeping area. They are on every level of the home and in other locations as required by laws, codes, or standards.
- ✓ The owner has posted a floor plan. It notes all escape routes and exits and provides emergency contact information.
- ✓ Everyone knows the address of the home.
- ✓ Everyone staying in the home has identified two ways out of every room and how to escape in an emergency.
- ✓ All doors and windows that lead outside are able to be opened.
- ✓ An outside meeting place has been chosen. It is a safe distance away from the home.
- ✓ Everyone knows how to call 9-1-1 or the local emergency number from a cell phone from outside.
- ✓ If smoking is allowed, a smoking area has been designated and is well away from the structure. Deep, sturdy ashtrays have been provided.
- ✓ All pathways are free and clear of tripping hazards.
- ✓ Electrical outlets are free from multiple cords and adaptors.
- ✓ The stovetop is clear. Anything that can catch fire is not near the stovetop, such as curtains and towels.

## WINDOW AND DOOR ALERT!

Be on the lookout for rooms with tiny windows. These are too small to serve as a means of escape.

Security bars on doors and windows can trap people in a fire. Make sure any security bars have quick-release devices. Tools, keys, or special efforts should not be needed to open them.

## KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

Peer-to-peer hospitality services are not regulated in the same way as hotels. Requirements vary widely across jurisdictions. Do your homework before making a reservation. Check online to see your travel destination's regulations for rental properties. Ask your host if the property meets the regulations. Discuss other safety concerns you may have.

Check the forecast in case of storms that could cause power outages; assure the property has equipment (batteries, lanterns, etc.) in the event of a power outage.



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# Smoke Alarms at Home

**SMOKE ALARMS ARE A KEY PART** of a home fire escape plan. When there is a fire, smoke spreads fast. Working smoke alarms give you early warning so you can get outside quickly.



## SAFETY TIPS

- Install smoke alarms in every bedroom. They should also be outside each sleeping area and on every level of the home. Install alarms in the basement.
- Large homes may need extra smoke alarms.
- It is best to use interconnected smoke alarms. When one smoke alarm sounds, they all sound.
- Test all smoke alarms at least once a month. Press the test button to be sure the alarm is working.
- Current alarms on the market employ different types of technology including multi-sensing, which could include smoke and carbon monoxide combined.
- Today's smoke alarms will be more technologically advanced to respond to a multitude of fire conditions, yet mitigate false alarms.
- A smoke alarm should be on the ceiling or high on a wall. Keep smoke alarms away from the kitchen to reduce false alarms. They should be at least 10 feet (3 meters) from the stove.
- People who are hard-of-hearing or deaf can use special alarms. These alarms have strobe lights and bed shakers.
- Replace all smoke alarms when they are 10 years old.

## FACTS

- ❗ A closed door may slow the spread of smoke, heat, and fire.
- ❗ Smoke alarms should be installed inside every sleeping room, outside each separate sleeping area, and on every level. Smoke alarms should be connected so when one sounds, they all sound. Most homes do not have this level of protection.
- ❗ Roughly 3 out of 5 fire deaths happen in homes with no smoke alarms or no working smoke alarms.



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# Carbon Monoxide Safety



Often called the invisible killer, carbon monoxide is an invisible, odorless, colorless gas created when fuels (such as gasoline, wood, coal, natural gas, propane, oil, and methane) burn incompletely. In the home, heating and cooking equipment that burn fuel can be sources of carbon monoxide.

- CO alarms should be installed in a central location outside each sleeping area and on every level of the home and in other locations where required by applicable laws, codes or standards. For the best protection, interconnect all CO alarms throughout the home. When one sounds, they all sound.
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions for placement and mounting height.
- Choose a CO alarm that is listed by a qualified testing laboratory.
- Call your local fire department's non-emergency number to find out what number to call if the CO alarm sounds.
- Test CO alarms at least once a month; replace them according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- If the audible trouble signal sounds, check for low batteries. If the battery is low, replace it. If it still sounds, call the fire department.
- If the CO alarm sounds, immediately move to a fresh air location outdoors or by an open window or door. Make sure everyone inside the home is accounted for. Call for help from a fresh air location and stay there until emergency personnel declare that it is safe to re-enter the home.
- If you need to warm a vehicle, remove it from the garage immediately after starting it. Do not run a vehicle or other fueled engine or motor indoors, even if garage doors are open. Make sure the exhaust pipe of a running vehicle is not covered with snow.
- During and after a snowstorm, make sure vents for the dryer, furnace, stove, and fireplace are clear of snow build-up.
- A generator should be used in a well-ventilated location outdoors away from windows, doors and vent openings.
- Gas or charcoal grills can produce CO — only use outside.

## HOME HEATING EQUIPMENT



Have fuel-burning heating equipment and chimneys inspected by a professional every year before cold weather sets in. When using a fireplace, open the flue for adequate ventilation. Never use your oven to heat your home.

## FACTS

- ❗ A person can be poisoned by a small amount of CO over a longer period of time or by a large amount of CO over a shorter amount of time.
- ❗ In 2010, U.S. fire departments responded to an estimated 80,100 non-fire CO incidents in which carbon monoxide was found, or an average of nine calls per hour.



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# FIRE EXTINGUISHER LOCATION AND PLACEMENT

Code officials are charged with ensuring that occupancies are properly outfitted with fire extinguishers and that they are placed in the right locations. This resource identifies which occupancies require extinguishers and where they should be placed within them. It also outlines related fire extinguisher requirements in NFPA® 10, *Standard for Portable Fire Extinguishers*.

## Occupancy Requirements

Fire extinguishers **are required** in the following occupancy types:

- |                        |                                   |                            |
|------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Ambulatory health care | Hotel and dormitory               | Health care                |
| Apartments             | Industrial                        | Educational                |
| Assemblies             | Lodging and rooming               | Storage                    |
| Businesses             | Mercantile                        | Detention and correctional |
| Day care               | Occupancies in special structures | Residential board and care |

Fire extinguishers are not typically required in one- and two-family dwellings. However, they shall be **required in all rental dwelling units** within the Town of Beech Mountain, regardless of occupancy type.

## Where and How Should Extinguishers Be Located?

Fire extinguishers that are placed correctly can be accessed more quickly to help control a fire until the fire department arrives. Fire extinguishers are not intended to be a substitute for evacuating the building safely and quickly. Two key factors for locating extinguishers are that they should be accessible and visible.

### Accessible

Extinguishers should be placed where they are readily accessible in the event of a fire, which typically includes normal paths of travel.

### Visible

If visual obstructions cannot be avoided, then arrows, lights, or signs are needed to help indicate where a fire extinguisher is located.

If extinguisher weighs **more than 40 lb (18.14 kg) ...**

- ▶ **Top of extinguisher** cannot be more than **3.5 ft (1.07 m)** from the ground
- ▶ **Bottom of extinguisher** must be at least **4 in. (102 mm)** off the ground



If extinguisher weighs **less than 40 lb (18.14 kg) ...**

- ▶ **Top of extinguisher** cannot be more than **5 ft (1.53 m)** from the ground
- ▶ **Bottom of extinguisher** must be at least **4 in. (102 mm)** off the ground

**In both cases, this includes extinguishers in cabinets, but it does not include wheeled extinguishers.**







# FIRE EXTINGUISHER LOCATION AND PLACEMENT *CONTINUED*

## Class A, B, C, D, and K Extinguisher Requirements

A portable extinguisher must match the fire that is being fought. There are five classes of fires. Extinguishers are labeled with letters and symbols for the classes of fires they can put out. While these requirements apply to all portable fire

extinguishers, different location requirements exist for Class A, B, C, D, and K extinguishers. See Figure B.1.1 of NFPA 10 for a recommended marking system that can be used to illustrate the uses and nonuses of fire extinguishers on a single label.

### Extinguisher Requirements Table

Extinguisher Class and Letter-Shaped Symbol Markings	Extinguisher Use	Location Requirements
<p>Ordinary</p> <p><b>A</b></p>  <p>Combustibles</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Required anywhere ordinary combustibles are present.</li> <li>▶ Fires involve materials such as wood, cloth, and paper.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Requirements for fire extinguisher size and spacing based on your hazard level are located in Table 6.2.1.1 of NFPA 10.</li> <li>▶ To determine the minimum number of extinguishers needed, divide the total floor area by the maximum floor area to be protected per extinguisher.</li> <li>▶ Travel distance to the extinguisher can't be more than 75 ft (22.9 m).</li> </ul>
<p>Flammable</p> <p><b>B</b></p>  <p>Liquids</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Required for locations where there is the potential for flammable liquid fires.</li> <li>▶ Fires involve flammable liquids such as gasoline, oil, and some paints and solvents.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Table 6.3.1.1 in NFPA 10 includes information about the maximum travel distance to extinguishers based on the type of hazard (low, moderate, or high) and the extinguisher rating.</li> <li>▶ Travel distance to the extinguisher cannot be more than 30 ft to 50 ft (9.1 m to 15.25 m), depending on the type of hazard and extinguisher rating.</li> </ul>
<p>Electrical</p> <p><b>C</b></p>  <p>Equipment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Required in areas where energized electrical equipment may be encountered.</li> <li>▶ Fires involve energized electrical equipment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ A Class C rating is only put on extinguishers that already have a Class A or Class B rating.</li> <li>▶ A Class A, Class B, or Class A &amp; B extinguisher gets measured to see if it conducts electricity and if it doesn't, then it gets a Class C rating.</li> </ul>
<p>Combustible</p> <p><b>D</b></p>  <p>Metals</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Required in areas where there is a potential for fires involving combustible metals.</li> <li>▶ Fires involve combustible metals, such as magnesium and sodium.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Should not be placed more than 75 ft (22.9 m) of travel distance from a potential hazard.</li> </ul>
<p><b>K</b></p> <p>N/A</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Used where there is a potential for fires involving combustible cooking components.</li> <li>▶ Fires involve cooking oils used in commercial cooking equipment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Should not be located further than 30 ft (9.1 m) from the hazard.</li> </ul>

**For More Information** Visit [nfpa.org/10](http://nfpa.org/10).



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This material contains some basic information about NFPA® 10, *Standard for Portable Fire Extinguishers*. It identifies some of the requirements in these documents as of the date of publication. This material is not the official position of any NFPA Technical Committee on any referenced topic which is represented solely by the NFPA documents on such topic in their entirety. For free access to the complete and most current version of all NFPA documents, please go to [nfpa.org/docinfo](http://nfpa.org/docinfo). References to "Related Regulations" or "Code/Standard for Reference" is not intended to be a comprehensive list. NFPA makes no warranty or guaranty of the completeness of the information in this material and disclaims liability for personal injury, property and other damages of any nature whatsoever, from the use of or reliance on this information. In using this information, you should rely on your independent judgment and, when appropriate, consult a competent professional.

# Heating Safety

There is something about the winter months and curling up with a good book by the fireplace. But did you know that heating equipment is one of the leading causes of home fire deaths? With a few simple safety tips and precautions you can prevent most heating fires from happening.

## BE WARM AND SAFE THIS WINTER!

- Keep anything that can burn at least three-feet (one metre) away from heating equipment, like the furnace, fireplace, wood stove, or portable space heater.
- Have a three-foot (one metre) “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 at least once a month.



## Heating Equipment Smarts

**Install** wood burning stoves following manufacturer’s instructions or have a professional do the installation. All fuel-burning equipment should be vented to the outside to avoid carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning.

**Install** and maintain CO alarms to avoid the risk of CO poisoning. If you **smell** gas in your gas heater, do not light the appliance. Leave the home immediately and call your local fire department or gas company.



## FACT

Half of home heating fires are reported during the months of **December, January, and February.**

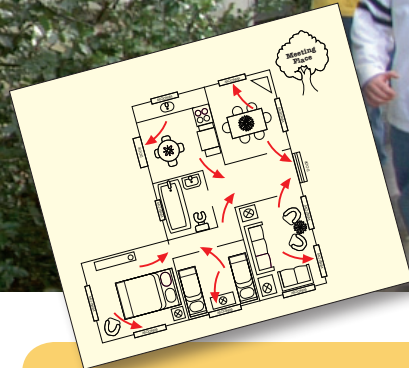


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# Escape Planning

Plan Ahead! If a fire breaks out in your home, you may have only a few minutes to get out safely once the smoke alarm sounds. Everyone needs to know what to do and where to go if there is a fire.



## SAFETY TIPS

- » MAKE a home escape plan. Draw a map of your home showing all doors and windows. Discuss the plan with everyone in your home.
- » KNOW at least two ways out of every room, if possible. Make sure all doors and windows leading outside open easily.
- » HAVE an outside meeting place (like a tree, light pole or mailbox) a safe distance from the home where everyone should meet.
- » PRACTICE your home fire drill at night and during the day with everyone in your home, twice a year.
- » PRACTICE using different ways out.
- » TEACH children how to escape on their own in case you can't help them.
- » CLOSE doors behind you as you leave.

## IF THE ALARM SOUNDS...

- » If the smoke alarm sounds, GET OUT AND STAY OUT. Never go back inside for people or pets.
- » If you have to escape through smoke, GET LOW AND GO under the smoke to your way out.
- » CALL the fire department from outside your home.

## FACTS

- ! A closed door may slow the spread of smoke, heat, and fire. Install smoke alarms inside every sleeping room and outside each separate sleeping area. Install alarms on every level of the home. Smoke alarms should be interconnected. When one smoke alarm sounds, they all sound.
- ! According to an NFPA survey, only **one of every three** American households have actually developed and practiced a home fire escape plan.
- ! While **71%** of Americans have an escape plan in case of a fire, only **47%** of those have practiced it.
- ! **One-third** of American households who made an estimate thought they would have at least 6 minutes before a fire in their home would become life-threatening. The time available is often less. And only **8%** said their first thought on hearing a smoke alarm would be to get out!



Your Source for SAFETY Information

NFPA Public Education Division • 1 Batterymarch Park, Quincy, MA 02169





# Fire Safety during Winter Storms

Winter storms can happen almost anywhere. They can cause us problems. Know what to do before, during and after a storm. This will help keep you and your family safe from a winter fire.

- Test all smoke alarms. Do this at least once a month. This way you will know they are working. Install carbon monoxide alarms in your home. Test the alarms.
- Plan two ways out of the home in case of an emergency. Clear driveway and front walk of ice and snow. This will provide easy access to your home.
- Make sure your house number can be seen from the street. If you need help, firefighters will be able to find you.
- Be ready in case the power goes out. Have flashlights on hand. Also have battery-powered lighting and fresh batteries. Never use candles.
- Stay aware of winter weather. Listen to the television or radio for updates. Watch for bulletins online.
- Check on neighbors. Check on others who may need help.
- Generators should be used outdoors. Keep them away from windows and doors. Do not run a generator inside your garage, even if the door is open.
- Stay away from downed wires. Report any downed wires to authorities.
- Be ready if the heat stops working. Use extra layers of clothes and blankets to stay warm. If you use an emergency heat source, keep anything that can burn at least 3 feet away.
- Turn portable heaters off when you leave the room. Turn them off when you go to bed.

## IMPORTANT REMINDER

There are more home fires in winter than in any other season. Half of all home heating fires happen in December, January and February.

As you stay cozy and warm this winter season, be fire smart!



### Fact

Nearly half of all space heater fires involve electric space heaters.



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