



NEWS

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For Immediate Release
February 9, 2011

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HUDGENS OFFERS HOME HEATING SAFETY TIPS

Atlanta – Following a fatal fire in Northeast Georgia which was sparked by an electric space heater and inappropriate use of extension cords, Insurance and Safety Fire Commissioner Ralph T. Hudgens wants to remind Georgians of some heating tips to help keep their homes safe this winter:

-- Heating equipment is one of the leading causes of home fires in Georgia. Portable space heaters, open fireplaces and wood stoves can be dangerous if misused. Keep them at least three feet away from curtains, draperies, and other flammable material. Make sure heaters have adequate ventilation, and always follow the manufacturer's operating instructions.

-- Only use approved or listed space heaters. Also, make sure a responsible adult is in the room to ensure the heater does not fall over.

-- Have your home heating unit checked annually to be sure it is working efficiently and safely. Make sure all fuel-burning appliances and fireplaces are properly vented. If you suspect a gas leak in your home, leave immediately and call the gas company while safely away from the home.

-- If you use kerosene space heaters, make sure each heater has an automatic shut-off in case it tips over. Use only K-1 kerosene in a space heater; gasoline can cause an explosion. Wait until the heater has cooled and take it outside before refueling.

-- Install an adequate number of smoke alarms.

-- Each household should have a well-rehearsed family escape plan. All rooms, especially bedrooms, should have two escape routes. Have a predetermined meeting place outside the house so you can be sure everyone is out safely.

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