City of Olean Fire Prevention Month Safety Tips

Greetings from the Olean Fire Department

Autumn brings beautiful fall foliage and cooler temperatures, which means heating systems will be turned on for the first time since early spring. Have your home heating systems (boilers, furnaces, wood stoves) along with any fireplaces inspected and serviced each year by a qualified technician. Chimneys should also be cleaned to remove creosote to ensure exhaust gases can freely escape and there are no fire safety concerns.

Heating System Tips:

- Inefficient heating systems can not only lead to fires but the emission of carbon monoxide, which is odorless, tasteless and deadly. Ensure your home has Carbon Monoxide detectors. For information on proper placement, call Code Enforcement at (716) 376-5683.
- Only use portable heaters that have been listed by a testing laboratory (look for the laboratory's label). These heaters should have an automatic shut-off switch so that if they are tipped over, they will turn off on their own. Plug portable electric heaters directly into the wall outlet; do not use an extension cord or power strip. Kerosene heaters must be refueled outside.

Fireplace Safety Tips:

- Use a tempered glass or metal screen over the fireplace opening to keep sparks inside. Never use papers, trash or liquid fuel in the fireplace. Burn only wood in fireplaces and wood or wood pellets in wood stoves.
- When you're finished with your fireplace, put it completely out before you leave home or fall asleep. When you clean up, place the ashes inside a metal can with a lid. Store the can outside, away from the home, until the ashes are completely cold.
- Keep anything that can burn at least 3 feet away from fireplaces, wood stoves, or other heat sources. The openings can get hot enough to burn skin, so use extra precautions to keep children and pets far away from them.

General Fire Safety

- Never leave children unattended around fire.
- Always have a responsible adult present who is not intoxicated by drugs or alcohol when having a recreational fire or using a fireplace.
- Prevent burn injuries by keeping children at least 3 feet away of heat sources, including kitchen appliances
- Store matches and lighters out of children's sight and reach.
- Ensure all smoke and carbon monoxide detectors are working.
- Ensure your dryer and heat vents are clean as well as unobstructed.
- Always sleep with your bedroom doors closed. This is crucially important because it isolates sleeping individuals from the toxic and superheated fire gases, should a fire occur elsewhere in the residence.

Family Fire Safety Planning

- Plan for emergencies. Older adults may move more slowly or have trouble hearing a smoke alarm due to hearing loss. Make a home fire escape plan around their abilities.
- Keep the telephone, hearing aids, and eyeglasses next to the bed. If someone in your care uses a cane or wheelchair, decide who will help him or her get out in an emergency.
- Ensure that trip hazards are minimized in your homes as this can inhibit a quick escape.
- Ensure that everyone is practicing your "Exit Drills in the Home" twice a year. Have a designated meeting location in a safe place. Practice staying low with children.
- Keep your doors closed at night to give yourself extra protection in case of a fire during the night.
- If a fire occurs and you get out, stay out. Close doors on your way out. Do not go back in for any reason.
- For assistance with exit drills or general fire safety questions, call Central Fire at (716) 376-5609

Halloween Safety Thoughts

- Children are naturally drawn to glowing jack-o'-lanterns and other flickering lights. Instead of flames, use battery-powered candles or flashlights to decorate. If children come too close to the flame of a lit candle they can be burned and/or their clothing can catch on fire. Battery-powered candles are the safer choice.
- Make sure that all decorations are kept away from flames and other types of heat.
- Keep all matches and lighters locked up. They should be in a high place out of your child's reach. Teach young children that they must not touch or play with these tools, ever. If they find matches or lighters, they should tell an adult where they are.
- Choose a costume with fire safety in mind. Fabric can catch fire if children walk close to flames. Avoid loose fabric and features that dangle or drag behind the child. Keep costume sleeves tight. Look for a fabric label that reads "flame-resistant" or "flame-retardant." Still remain alert, even flame-resistant fabric can burn.
- Never let children play with or carry lit candles. Give each child a flashlight to carry while trick-or-treating. Check porches for lit candles, torches and other flames before letting children approach the door.
- Young children need adult supervision at all times. Stay alert. Watch children closely at parties and as they go door to door.
- Use flash lights, glow sticks, or other illuminating devices when out walking.
- Check your child's candy and treats before allowing them to enjoy some. Ensure they are in sealed packaging that do not appear tampered with.

On behalf of the City of Olean Fire Department please stay safe and enjoy the fall season.