

# Winter Fire Safety

Although snow is a welcome change by many from our usual damp conditions, the cold and snow can also bring hidden dangers to local businesses and homeowners. The Ketchikan Fire Department would like to give you a few tips to help prevent damage to your homes or businesses from unwelcome water or fire and the danger to your family from toxic carbon monoxide (CO) fumes.

## Remember:

1. Heat-tapes on plumbing and in gutters or downspouts must be properly installed and maintained regularly to prevent overheating and the possibility of fire.
2. Should your pipes freeze, never leave portable heaters or other equipment used to thaw frozen pipes unattended.
3. Water and electricity “DO NOT MIX.” Use caution when using any type of electrical equipment near pipes or in damp environments.
4. Chimneys and flues need to be cleaned and maintained on a regular basis to prevent not only fire, but the creation of carbon monoxide fumes that can lead to sickness or death. Check for obstructions, damage, and discoloration. If you think there may be a problem, you’re probably right!
5. Fire hydrants need to be kept clear of snow and obstructions so when we need them, we can get to them quickly and safely. Time is one of our biggest adversaries and everything you can do to help saves us time.
6. Vehicles parked on narrow streets often create problems for fire apparatus or ambulances. Always leave enough room for emergency vehicles to get by when you park. It may be your house or your family member that needs our help.
7. Do not park in fire lanes, block access to fire hydrants, or obstruct fire protection equipment. This can hamper fire suppression operations as well as prevent rapid response on a medical emergency.
8. Drive smart!!! Always check your rearview mirror(s). With our narrow (snow covered) roads, fire apparatus need more room. Don’t slam on your brakes if an emergency vehicle approaches you from behind, pull to the right at your earliest convenience and allow the emergency vehicle to pass safely.
9. “Smoke Alarms Save Lives”.... Make sure your smoke alarms are installed properly. Make sure you test yours regularly. A new battery is an inexpensive insurance policy.

*If you have any questions regarding winter fire safety, smoke alarms, or other questions regarding your fire department, contact The Ketchikan Fire Department’s Fire Prevention Division at 225-5940.*