



Olathe Fire Department

News Release

George Bentley, Fire Chief

WATCH WHAT YOU HEAT

For immediate release: Tuesday, February 19, 2008

CONTACT: Mike Hall (913) 208-7967 ***SOUND BITES AVAILABLE***

(OLATHE, Kan.) – Heating equipment is a leading cause of home fires. On March 15, 2006, a flue fire ignited Barb Schmitz's wood roof causing hundreds of thousands of dollars in damage (*Check your b-roll or our b-roll is available by request – sound bites from Barb available too*).

As cold weather blankets the metro and single-digit temperatures approach, follow a few tips to keep your family safer when heating:

- If you burn wood in your fireplace or wood burning stove, have your chimney or flue cleaned frequently by an expert to avoid a build-up of creosote.
- Burn only well-seasoned, dry wood in your fireplace or wood burning stove.
- Make sure fireplaces have special glass doors or a tight fitting screen to keep sparks from flying out.
- Dispose of fireplace ashes properly - never put ashes in or near something that could burn, like plastic garbage bags, cardboard boxes, etc.
- SPACE HEATERS NEED SPACE! Keep them away from curtains, blankets, clothes and other items that could catch on fire. Unplug the heater when finished, leaving home or before sleeping.
- Have your furnace checked regularly by an expert.
- Keep all materials, like newspapers, boxes, rags, etc., at least three feet from heating appliances (fireplace, wood burning stove, furnace, water heater, etc.).
- Always keep children and pets away from fireplaces, wood burning stoves, space heaters, furnaces and water heaters.

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