

Plug heaters directly into the wall socket rather than using an extension cord and unplug them when they are not in use.

- **Use kerosene heaters only if permitted by law in your area.** Refuel kerosene heaters outdoors only after they have cooled. Kerosene has a low flash point. If mistakenly dripped on hot surfaces, it can cause fires. Do not substitute gasoline for kerosene in the heater. Make sure the area is ventilated properly. Follow all of the manufacturer's instructions.
- **Have chimneys and wood stoves inspected annually and cleaned if necessary.** Chimneys and wood stoves build up creosote, which is the residue left behind by burning wood. Creosote is flammable and needs to be professionally removed periodically. Store ashes in a metal container with a tight-fitting lid.
- **Bring your companion animals inside during winter weather.**

#### Protect Your Property

##### CORE ACTION MESSAGES

- Guard against fire and CO poisoning.
- Insulate your home and protect the pipes.

**If you live in an area where severe winter weather is possible, you should:**

- **Make sure your home is properly insulated.** If necessary, insulate the walls and attic to reduce your home's power demands for heat. Caulk and weather-strip doors and windowsills to keep cold air out.
- **Install storm windows or cover windows with plastic from the inside** to provide an extra layer of insulation to keep cold air out.
- **Protect pipes from freezing by:**
  - Wrapping pipes in insulation or layers of newspaper and then covering them with plastic to keep out moisture.
  - Letting faucets drip a little.
- **Know how to shut off the main water valve and how to shut off and drain outside faucets.** Outside faucets are often controlled by a valve inside the home. Keep a wrench near the valves.
- **Install heat tape on water pipes.** Put the tape on all exterior water pipes and interior pipes located on outside walls or anywhere else that temperatures could go below freezing. Follow carefully the manufacturer's instructions for installation.
- **If the pipes freeze, remove any insulation or newspaper and wrap the pipes in rags.** Completely open all faucets and pour hot water over the pipes, starting where they were most exposed to the cold or where the cold most likely penetrated. A hand-held hair dryer, used with caution to prevent overheating, also works well.
- **Consider buying emergency heating equipment, such as a wood- or coal-burning stove or an electric or kerosene heater.** If you have a stove, be sure it is properly vented and in good working order and that you dispose of ashes safely. Keep a supply of wood or coal on hand. If you have an electric space heater, either portable or fixed, be sure it is certified by an independent testing laboratory. Plug a heater directly into the wall socket rather than using an extension cord and unplug it when it is not in use. Use a kerosene heater only if permitted by law in your area; check with your local fire department. If you have a kerosene heater, use only the correct fuel for your unit. Properly ventilate the area of use. Refuel the unit outdoors only, and only when the unit