

# Heating System Safety

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## Safety Tips

### Generators

- Generators and fuel should always be used outdoors – and at least 20 feet away from windows, doors and attached garages.
- Install working carbon monoxide detectors on every level of your home. Carbon monoxide is a colorless, odorless gas that can kill you, your family and pets.
- Keep the generator dry and protected from rain or flooding. Never touch a wet generator or devices connected to one: they can cause electrical shock.
- Always connect the generator to appliances with heavy-duty extension cords.
- Let the generator cool before refueling. Fuel spilled on hot engine parts can ignite.
- Follow the manufacturer’s instructions carefully.

### Portable Space Heaters

- Keep combustible objects at least three feet away from portable heating devices.
- Only buy heaters evaluated by a nationally recognized laboratory, such as Underwriters Laboratories (UL).
- Check to make sure the portable heater has a thermostat control mechanism and will switch off automatically if the heater falls over.
- Only use crystal clear K-1 kerosene in kerosene heaters. Never overfill it.
- Use the heater in a well-ventilated room, away from curtains and other flammable items.

### Fireplaces and Woodstoves

- Inspect and clean woodstove pipes and chimneys annually and check monthly for damage or obstructions.



- Use a fireplace screen heavy enough to stop rolling logs and big enough to cover the entire opening of the fireplace to catch flying sparks.
- Make sure the fire is completely out before leaving the house or going to bed.

## Resources

### Efficiency Vermont

Efficiency Vermont offers rebates to help low- and moderate-income residents replace flood-damaged heating systems, water heating systems, and other appliances. To learn more or apply, visit [Flood Recovery Rebates | Efficiency Vermont](#).

### FEMA

If you applied for FEMA assistance before the October 31 deadline, FEMA may be able to reimburse the cost to repair or replace your heating system. When FEMA's home inspector visits, make sure to tell them that your heater was damaged. If you discover damage after the inspector's visit, call the FEMA Helpline at **800-621-3362**. If you use a relay service such as video relay service (VRS), captioned telephone service or others, give FEMA your number for that service when you call.

If you discover disaster-caused damage after you receive a FEMA grant, you can appeal to get it covered. Within 60 days, write a letter to explain why you're appealing, then submit your letter and a contractor's estimate for replacement of the furnace or water heater by:

- Mail: FEMA National Processing Service Center, P.O. Box 10055, Hyattsville, MD 20782-7055
- Fax: 800-827-8112 (Attention: FEMA)
- Upload to your account on [DisasterAssistance.gov](#)

For more information, visit [How to Appeal Your Determination Letter | FEMA.gov](#).

FEMA is committed to ensuring disaster assistance is accomplished equitably, without discrimination on the grounds of race, color, religion, nationality, sex, age, disability, English proficiency or economic status. Any disaster survivor or member of the public may contact the FEMA Civil Rights Office if they feel that they are the



victim of discrimination. FEMA's Civil Rights Office can be contacted at 833-285-7448. Multilingual operators are available.

