

# Seniors Newsletter

## Puget Sound Fire



To build a trusted resource for building safe and healthy communities.

Winter 2020



## It's Cold Outside

There is something about the winter months and curling up with a good book by the fireplace or heater. Did you know that heating equipment is one of the leading causes of home fire deaths? With a few simple safety tips and precautions you can prevent most heating fires from happening.

- Place space heater on a solid, flat surface. Keep anything that can burn at least three-feet (one meter) away from heating equipment, like the furnace, fireplace, wood stove, or portable space heater.
- Check your space heater for cracked or damaged cords and plugs. Plug space heaters directly into wall outlets, do not use extension cords or power strip.

- Make sure space heaters have an automatic shut-off, so if it tips over, they shut off.
- Turn space heaters off when leaving the room or going to bed.
- When using a fireplace keep a glass or metal screen in front of the fireplace to prevent embers or sparks from jumping out.
- Do not burn paper in your fireplace.
- Put the fire out before you go to sleep or leave your home.
- Store cooled ashes in a tightly covered metal container and keep it outside at least 10 feet from your home and any nearby buildings.
- Never use your oven to heat your home.
- Have working smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors and test at least once a month.



**Keep yourself safe  
and warm this  
winter season.**



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# Preparing for the Cold

## What is Carbon Monoxide?

Carbon Monoxide, also known as CO is called the "Invisible Killer". Because CO is odorless, colorless, and otherwise undetectable to the human senses, people may not know that they are being exposed. The initial symptoms of low to moderate CO poisoning are similar to the flu (but without the fever).

Symptoms include headache, fatigue, shortness of breath, nausea, and dizziness. High level CO poisoning results in more severe symptoms including mental confusion, vomiting, loss of muscular coordination, loss of consciousness, and ultimately death.

## Potential Sources of Carbon Monoxide



## Prevention

Install carbon monoxide detectors in your home according to manufacturer's directions of location, and longevity. Test once a month, and replace batteries at least once a year.



## Steering Safely

Hazards such as black ice, fog, high winds and white out conditions can impair visibility and safe driving.

**Winterize your car** check all systems including fluids, brakes, tire pressure and tread, wiper blades, and ensure lights are working. Steer safely by slowing down and taking your time. Remember to take care on bridges and ramps, don't tailgate, turn headlights on and don't brake while turning. Stock blankets and keep the gas tank full. Watch the weather and don't venture out when the roads are unsafe to travel. Stay safe and warm at home.

## Healthy Mind and Body

Keeping your mind and body sharp through activities is important at every age. In the senior population, however, it's especially important to keep active to maintain cognitive and physical health. It becomes especially challenging to stay at home and avoid exposure to COVID19.

**Walk** Exercise—has been proven to have a positive effect on the brain. Aim for 30 minutes every day. If that's too much, break it up into shorter strolls. Regular exercise - especially if you do it briskly has many benefits. It can help control your weight, boost your mood, keeps bones and muscles strong, helps you sleep better, makes you less likely to get heart disease, high blood pressure, and high cholesterol.

## Stay Connected

Loneliness is harmful to your health. Do volunteer work or simply help someone in need. *Connect with others*— call a friend or family member. Call the local senior center to find out how you can connect, especially during COVID19. *Volunteering*—share time and talents doing volunteer work can bring a sense of purpose and fulfillment. *Spend time on joyful activities*— Everyone has a different interest or hobby that brings joy, whether it's a good book, music, art, dance, gardening or games. Try to spend time doing something that brings you happiness on a daily basis to improve quality of life and positive thoughts.

