

# City Happenings

December 2016

An eNewsletter from the City of Lexington, Nebraska



## New 4-Megawatt Solar Energy Array for Lexington



Construction of the largest per-capita solar array in Nebraska is now underway. **IGS Solar, LLC**, a turnkey commercial and residential solar provider, has partnered with **Sol Systems**, a solar energy investment and development firm, to install a 4 MW array in Lexington, on previously undeveloped City-owned land northeast of Plum Creek Parkway and Commerce Road.

The array is being installed by Sol Systems' local engineering, procurement, and construction (EPC) partners, **GenPro Energy Solutions** and **Russell Pacific**. The project was originally conceived at the local level between GenPro Energy Solutions, **Husker Solar**, and the **City of Lexington**, and has used local workers and sourcing from nearby businesses to aid in construction.

Once installed, the system of nearly 12,600 panels will produce more than 7 million kilowatt hours of electricity per year, enough to power about 600 homes annually.

"Our partnership with IGS Solar and Sol Systems allows us to support the development of diversified renewable energy in Nebraska, play a part in the reduction of environmental emissions, and provide a long-term cost savings to benefit our electric customers," said City Manager Joe Pepsitsch.

Expect the array to be up and running in the spring of 2017.



### You can get a Rebate when you buy LED Bulbs

(Lexington Utilities System customers)

Offer ends Dec. 31, 2016



Customers who buy certain Light-Emitting Diode (LED) bulbs can get a rebate from LEXUS.

- ★ \$3 incentive per LED bulb for A19 (standard shape) 800 lumen or higher
- ★ Limit 15 incentives per account annually
- ★ Application Form & Copy of dated receipt(s) required

Brought to you by:



Find a link on the "UTILITIES" section of [www.cityoflex.com](http://www.cityoflex.com).



## Lexington City Council Changes

Following the general election every two years, the City Council holds an "organizational meeting" on the first Tuesday of December. The newly elected or re-elected council members take the oath of office, and elect one from among the five members to be president (mayor) and one vice president. On December 6, 2016, John Fagot was re-elected President and John Salem Vice-President.

A bittersweet turn of events occurred at the end of this year's organizational meeting. Councilwoman Linda Miller read a letter announcing her resignation from the Council. A 12-year Council member, Miller recently learned her husband, Dr. Joe Miller, had accepted a medical position in Omaha, and the couple would have to move.

Councilmembers and staff alike praised Miller on her years of dedicated and thoughtful service.

At its December 13 regular meeting, the Council, per state statute, appointed Miller's replacement: Steve Smith of the H.O. Smith Company. Smith has long been a member of Lexington's Planning Commission and Community Development Agency.



Steve Smith taking the oath of office on Dec. 13.



(above) Lexington's elected City Council, left to right: John Fagot (Mayor), Linda Miller, Jeremy Roberts, Dora Vivas, John Salem.



The City's website has tools to help you save energy and money.

[www.cityoflex.com/departments/utilities](http://www.cityoflex.com/departments/utilities)



## Mid-Town Road Work Completed



LEFT: The finished intersection of 8th & Harrison, the last segment of the project.  
BELOW: A map of the full project scope.



Infrastructure improvements on **6th, 7th & 8th Streets** between **Lincoln and Harrison Streets** are substantially complete. The project included improvements to water, storm sewer, street and sidewalk sections, curbs, and handicap ramps. The improvements will greatly improve drainage and safety in the area. The project was funded by a Comprehensive Investment Stabilization grant, part of a Community Development Block Grant program administered by the Nebraska Department of Economic Development.



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Let's bring in the **NEW Year** with all things healthy. **Saturday, January 14, 10a-1p.**



**Free to the public**

**Orthman Community YMCA**  
1207 North Grant Street, Lexington, Ne 68850  
308-324-1970  
[www.orthmanymca.org](http://www.orthmanymca.org)

Vendors/Health Organizations please reserve your space at the Orthman YMCA by contacting Terri Burch, 324-1970 or at [tburch@orthmanymca.org](mailto:tburch@orthmanymca.org).



## NBDC Helps Lex Businesses



(above) Representatives from the City, Chamber of Commerce, Dawson Area Development, and NBDC met Oct. 26, 2016, to identify potential businesses and plan for the week of consultations.

A team of consultants from Nebraska Business Development Center (NBDC) spent about a week in Lexington helping small disadvantaged (women and minority owned) businesses.

Led by NBDC senior consultant Dr. Bob Bernier from the University of Nebraska College of Business, nine consultants went one-on-one with nine participating businesses. After spending time and assessing the businesses, the consultants gave advice as needed on business plans, marketing, store displays, financial and inventory strategies, and more.

The intensive analyses and consultations ran the week of November 14, but the consultants said they would continue to be available should business owner have additional questions.

**STUDENTS!**  
**NOW** is the time to apply for summer  
City jobs: concessions, life-guards, & lawn mowing.  
Go to [www.cityoflex.com/departments/city/human-resources](http://www.cityoflex.com/departments/city/human-resources)  
for more information and to download a blank application form. Send completed application to address below or email to [pbaruth@cityoflex.com](mailto:pbaruth@cityoflex.com).  
**Don't delay — do it today!**

NBDC worked with Dawson Area Development, the Lexington Area Chamber of Commerce, and the City of Lexington to identify likely businesses for the program.



(above) Dr. Bob Bernier, standing with an interpreter, addresses other consultants and Lexington business owners at a kick-off dinner on Nov. 13.



## Flags Flown for Glenn Hawks at Capitols

On December 11, the anniversary of Glenn Hawks's birth, a flag was flown in his honor at the U.S. Capitol. The much-beloved Hawks died August 8 after a 66-year career working for the City of Lexington.



The City of Lexington requested the honor on behalf of Hawks. The City also had a second commemorative flag flown over the Nebraska State Capitol on August 18.



### HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

**Friday, Dec. 23**  
City offices close at **noon** (The Grand Generation Center will serve a "Christmas Brunch" from 10:00 - 11:00 AM)

**Monday, Dec. 26**  
City offices closed

**Monday, Jan. 2**  
City offices closed

See [Page 7](#) for more Library closures

## CITY OF *Lexington* NEBRASKA presents: **Lexington TURF TOTS**

**WHERE** Lexington Fieldhouse, 1502 Airport Road, Lexington, NE

**WHEN**  
January 16 - March 30, 2017  
Monday & Wednesday, 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.  
Tuesday & Thursday, 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

### ABOUT

- ▶ Turf Tots is a drop-in free play program for children 1-5 years old. Kids can run and play with equipment provided by the City, including sport balls, crawl tunnels, hula hoops, and more!
- ▶ Parents are required to play on the field and supervise during the event.
- ▶ Please ensure you and your toddler wear comfortable clothing and tennis shoes.
- ▶ An extra layer is advisable in case they get cold.
- ▶ No food is allowed in the Fieldhouse.
- ▶ Water is allowed in spill-proof bottles on concrete areas.

**CONTACT** Ann H. Luther, 308-325-5277



## Help Light Up Downtown Lexington Over the Holidays



The City of Lexington, through the **Lexington Community Foundation**, is raising funds to pay for new lighted downtown holiday decorations.

The decorations 50-inch wreaths with white lights and red bows are now installed and adding holiday cheer to our downtown.

Over the last decade the City has stepped up measures to improve the aesthetics of downtown, with projects such as historic street lights, new banners, vacant lot beautification, larger flower planters and other landscaping. This project will continue the efforts to spruce up Lexington's Main Street.

It's not too late to contribute for these through 2016's Give BIG Lexington. We're asking you to let your holiday spirit shine and consider giving to help light up the holidays for years to come!

## City Employees are Holiday Helpers



Thanks to donations from many generous donors, the City of Lexington Employee Committee collected and delivered a truck load of winter coats, mittens, and other cold weather wear to the Lexington Public Schools in November.



Then the Committee reached into its own coffers to buy and donate five hams and turkeys at Thanksgiving, to help families through the Parent-Child Center. The Committee is repeating this donation for the Christmas holiday, for a total of 10 hams and 10 turkeys.



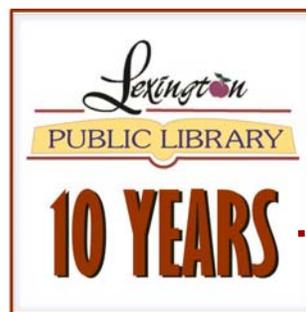
Parent-Child Center





## Library News

by Kathy Thomsen  
Library Director



at  
907  
North  
Washington  
Street



The Library will be serving coffee, tea, hot cider and cookies Dec. 21 - 23. Take a break

from winter's chilly weather and shopping to relax in front of the fireplace with cookies and a warm beverage.

The Library will have its annual **Nearly New Book Sale** from December 5 - 31.



New items are added as we have room on the tables, so check back regularly for more deals. We have lots of gently used books that make great gifts for the holidays.



The Library will close at noon on Friday, Dec. 23 and will remain closed December 24,

25 and 26 for the Christmas holiday. The Library will reopen at 9:00 a.m. on Dec. 27. The Library will be open from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 31, but will be closed on Sunday and Monday, Jan. 1 and 2. The Library will reopen on January 3 at 9:00 a.m.



The Library will be the host site for the **Hospice Memorial Tree** again this year. Ornaments in memory of loved ones are on display on the tree. A memory ornament for each family to put on their tree at home is also available at the Library.

Another tree that can be found at the Library this year is the **Giving Tree** sponsored by **Healing Hearts and Families**. To participate in the Giving Tree, stop by the Library and select one or more ornaments off of the tree and purchase the items printed on the ornaments. Return the item and the ornament to the Library. Healing Hearts and Families will distribute the items.



The "Booked for Lunch"

program in 2017 will move to the 4th Thursday of each month. On Thursday, January 26, 2017, at noon, **Helen Johnson** will present a new version of **Helen's Musical Hats**. A soup and salad lunch will be served, so call the Library at 324-2151 to register for this program.



On Thursday, January 19 at 7:00 p.m. the Library will welcome storyteller, **Kim Westkamp** as part of the

Kearney Area Storytelling Festival. "Kim is a master at seamlessly building bridges from story to song to story." She evokes both laughter and tears.

This program and the "Booked for Lunch" programs are sponsored by the **Lexington Library Memorial Fund** and the **Lexington Community Foundation**.





## Community Walking Event

**Tuesday, December 20, 2016**

Everyone in the Lexington Community is encouraged to join the movement and walk (if you can't walk or it's too cold, move) for at least 15 minutes at any time on this day!

(The Fieldhouse (1502 Airport Rd.) will be open 11:30 - 1:30 to accommodate walkers - wear tennis shoes!)

**Sign up using the link**  
[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSetXM19LKqDThZevemhpOE1WALS2IFLFB\\_wO0REOIMNPXWVQ/viewform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSetXM19LKqDThZevemhpOE1WALS2IFLFB_wO0REOIMNPXWVQ/viewform)  
 and/or post a picture to the Walk Lex Facebook page of you, your co-workers, family, and or friends **WALKING** to enter for a chance to win prizes!



#WALKLEX #WALKNE #SHARETHEROAD




**Like us on Facebook!**  
 Get the latest scoops about what's going on in Lexington!

FaceBook users: be sure to search for "City of Lexington, Nebraska" (not to be confused with the generic page the FaceBook folks created). Only our official page gives you the latest news and updates.

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/City-of-Lexington-Nebraska/157277430966096>

## Remember, it ALL drains to our lakes and rivers



### Help keep pollution out of storm drains

**Only rain in the drain!**  
 That's because storm drains and roadside ditches lead directly to our lakes and rivers. So, any oil, pet waste, leaves, trash, or dirty water from washing your car that enters a storm drain gets into our lakes and rivers. With thousands of people living in and around Lexington, we all need to be aware of what goes into our storm drains.

**So what can you do? Simple:**

- Sweep fertilizer off of driveways and sidewalks, back onto your lawn.
- Keep leaves, grass clippings, trash, and fertilizers out of storm drains.
- Do not dump motor oil, anti-freeze, chemicals, pet waste, dirty soapy water, or anything else down the storm drains.
- Volunteer to label the storm drains in your neighborhood to inform your neighbors that storm drains flow directly to our lakes and rivers (contact Keep Lexington Beautiful, (308) 324-7986, or [keeplexbeautiful@yahoo.com](mailto:keeplexbeautiful@yahoo.com)).

**KEEP OUR WATER CLEAN!**



Support provided by NDEQ

CITY OF **Lexington** NEBRASKA  
[www.cityoflex.com](http://www.cityoflex.com)



## EnergyWise Tip: **Stumpy the Short Nosed Reindeer**

Yeah, yeah, yeah. I know that you know Dasher, Dancer, Prancer, Vixen, Comet, Cupid, Donner, Blitzen and even Rudolph. But did you hear about Rudolph's brother-in-law that had to get an extra job with a second-day air delivery company because he could not afford his energy bills?

I'm talking about **Stumpy the Short-nosed Reindeer!** Most reindeer agree that a \$600 per month electric bill is a lot for a three stall bungalow occupied by a family of five. What is sad is that Stumpy pays hundreds every month for wasted energy, and his second job does not leave time to try out for pulling Santa's sled!

To start with, Stumpy's kids were huge gamers and sound system freaks. A bunch of their devices such as the video displays, televisions, hard drives, speakers, tuners, ISP equipment, gaming consoles and external drives run continuously. If you add up all that energy used by electronics in Stumpy's home, it comes to over \$50 a month! He should have used his surge protection bars that everything was plugged into and simply shut off (or have the fawns shut off) all the extra load when it was not being used. But, we all know how bad kids are at shutting stuff off when they are done using it.

Unfortunately, Stumpy's excess energy use does not end there. His wife suffers from cold flashes. Rather than setting their thermostat to the recommended winter setpoints of 68°F during the day and 63°F at night or when no one is at home, Stumpy's wife, Crystal (Rudolph's sister), cranks the thermostat to 80°F and leaves it there! Then, once she gets too warm, she opens the windows and leaves for work! Eventually, Stumpy comes home, lowers the thermostat and closes the windows. But he always forgets to use the window

locks to seal the window and reduce outside air from sneaking in.

To make matters worse, Crystal always leaves the bathroom exhaust fan on after her morning shower. That alone adds \$150 to their electric bill. Installing a timer on that fan would solve that problem. Stumpy should also consider installing a smart thermostat with a wi-fi connection. That way he could remotely program or turn the thermostat down after Crystal leaves for work.



Trust me, Stumpy deserves a bunch of the blame himself for his crazy utility bills! Did you know that last December his outdoor hot tub running continuously cost him more than \$150? If anyone plans to maintain an outdoor hot tub during the winter, they should have sufficient insulation around the tub and turn back the thermostat when it is not being used. Better yet, he could have drained it for the winter season or moved his tub indoors if it is important enough to run all year.

Finally, Stumpy needs to do something about Durwood, his deadbeat brother who lives in his basement. Durwood is on medical disability after he claimed his night vision was damaged last year from

staring too long at Rudolph's nose when he was in the bar one night. Consequently, Durwood turns on every light in the basement and never switches them off. If Stumpy would change all those incandescent bulbs and install LED bulbs, he could reduce his use of electricity for lighting by 80 percent. Using LED Christmas lights as opposed to traditional lighting strings could save more than 90 percent!

Unbeknownst to Stumpy, Durwood has also added more than 1,400 kilowatt-hours to the electric bill each year by keeping a 1986 beer fridge in his closet. A new energy-efficient model of the same size would only use 350 kilowatt-hours. Better yet, if Durwood is only trying to keep a six-pack or two cold, he should unplug the old unit and find a corner in Stumpy and Crystal's EnergyStar® refrigerator upstairs to keep his beverages chilled.

Don't plan on hearing about Stumpy the Short-nosed Reindeer anytime soon. Until he contacts his local utility to find out how to reduce his electric bill, he is going to be working a lot of overtime. With any luck, he might have Christmas off.

Lexington Utilities System and Nebraska Public Power District wish you and yours the very best during this holiday season. Part of our commitment to providing you outstanding customer service includes helping you make the most of the energy you use throughout the year. For more ideas on how you can make your home or business EnergyWise<sup>SM</sup>, contact [Lexington Utilities System](http://LexingtonUtilitiesSystem.com) or visit [www.nppd.com](http://www.nppd.com).



## Gravel No More on Ontario

One of the last remaining gravel roads in Lexington was upgraded in October. North Ontario Street between 8th & 9th is now fully paved. The actual work took only a couple of weeks.



## Lexington snow and ice removal

Winter is here and the City would like to remind citizens of the following points related to snow removal. There is also an Emergency Snow Route map on the next page, and is also found on the Maps link at the City's website.

Property owners are required to remove snow and ice from sidewalks abutting their property, within 48 hours of the snowfall. Removal of snow and ice from sidewalks not only ensures safe passage for pedestrians (including school children), but also limits liability. Someone who sustains injuries from slipping on ice might claim their injuries resulted from property owner neglect.

Please remember that snow and ice removed from your property is not to be placed into the street. Instead move it to non-paved areas.

The City needs the cooperation of all citizens as we work to remove snow and ice from the streets. Citizens are encouraged to listen to local radio stations or read the local

newspaper (including online) for announcements of possible Snow Emergency situations where substantial snowfall is experienced or anticipated.



In times of a declared Snow Emergency, parking along streets in the designated Snow Emergency Route is prohibited. Commercial Areas may also be included (see Snow Route map).

Citizens living along these routes are encouraged to comply with the prohibition and move their vehicles from the street.

In addition, during a Snow Emergency, parking in the Downtown area is prohibited. In non-emergency times, citizens are still encouraged to move their parked vehicles off of the street in a reasonable period of time after snowfall to

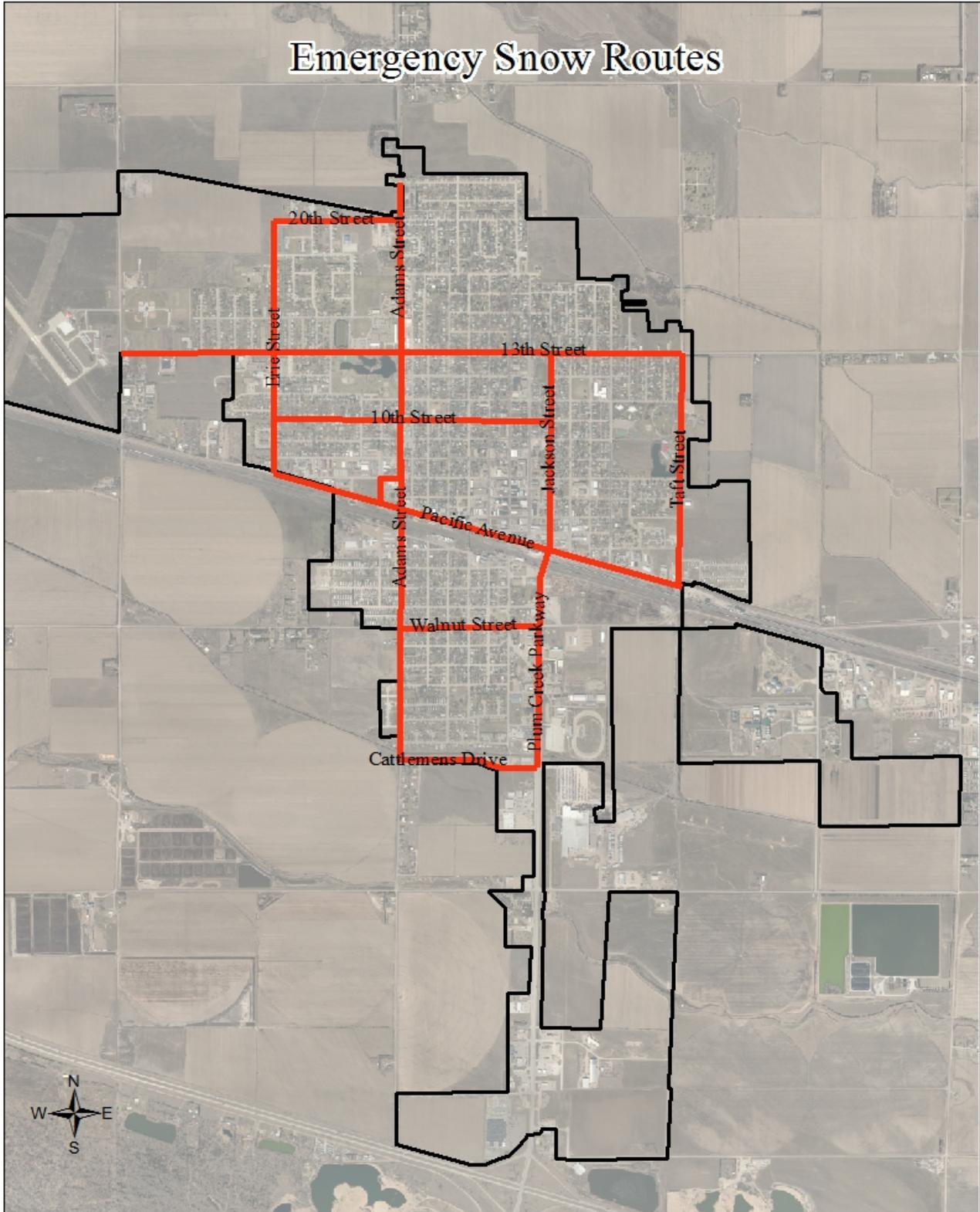
allow City crews access to remove the snow and ice. Information regarding the removal of snow in your area of the City can be obtained by contacting Tom Nelson at 308-324-5995.

The City of Lexington would like to reiterate that snow and ice removal is important for vehicular traffic as well as pedestrian traffic.

Please take the time to do your part to keep our streets and sidewalks safe.

The City of Lexington thanks everyone for their cooperation and prompt attention to this issue.

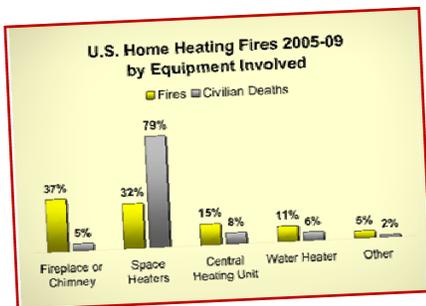




# Electric Safety Bulletin

## Space Heater Safety

You might be turning on a space heater to keep warm in this cool weather. However, you might not know that thousands of fires are caused every year by space heaters, especially improperly used ones. The National Fire Protection Association says in 2011, space heaters were involved in about 17,850 home fires.



Here are some safety tips from Underwriters Laboratories (UL) and other sources:

- Always read and follow the manufacturer's recommendations.
- Every level of your home should have a working smoke detector that is tested on a monthly basis.
- Keep all space heaters three feet away from anything that could catch on fire.
- Make sure the space heater includes a tip-over switch to ensure that it shuts off if it accidentally tips over.
- NEVER leave a space heater unattended.
- NEVER use a space heater in the room where you will be sleeping.
- NEVER place heaters on furniture. They are designed to be placed on the floor.
- Unless the heater is designed for use outdoors or in bathrooms, do not use in damp, wet areas.
- NEVER place heaters where towels or other objects could fall on the heater and start a fire.

- Do not use extension cords with space heaters unless absolutely necessary. If you have to use an extension cord, make sure it has a power rating as high or higher as that of the heater itself. Keep the cord stretched out and do not allow it to become buried under rugs or carpeting. Don't place anything on top of the cord. If the cord ever feels even slightly warm, discontinue use.
- Inspect the heater's cord periodically to look for frayed wire or damaged insulation. Do not use a space heater with a damaged cord.
- Check periodically for a secure plug/outlet fit. If the plug becomes very hot, the outlet may need to be replaced by a qualified technician. This could be the sign of a potential home wiring issue.



- Use space heaters only as a supplementary, small-area sources of heat. They are not intended to replace the home's heating system, and turning the central heating system down too low may result in water pipes bursting.
- Don't use a space heater to dry your wet clothes or pull it closer when you are in a bath tub.
- Keep pets and children away from space heaters.



- Space heaters take a lot of electricity. They can overload the home's wiring, especially if other high-wattage appliance are on at the same time. This may cause overheating of circuits, which may lead to fires.
- Make sure the space heater you are buying is certified and labeled as such on the box (such as Underwriters Laboratory).
- If you have a **liquid-fueled** space heater, use only the fuel recommended by the manufacturer. The wrong fuel could burn hotter than the equipment was designed for and cause a serious fire.
- When refueling, turn off the heater and let it cool down completely before adding fuel. Wipe away any spills promptly.
- Before you buy a kerosene heater, check with your local fire department to ensure that it is legal in your area.
- Kerosene heaters have a different type of threat with the potential of carbon monoxide poisoning, so take that into consideration.