Space Heater Safety

Space heaters are common forms of heating, but like many heating sources, do pose potential fire hazards. If you have a space heater in your home, the American Trauma Society, Pennsylvania Division (ATSPA) recommends following these safety tips:

- Keep the heater at least three feet away from combustibles (curtains, newspapers, blankets, etc.).
- Never leave a space heater turned on while you are sleeping or away from the home.
- Use only as a supplemental heat source.
- Place the heater on a flat surface.
- Don’t use in bathrooms or near water.
- Keep pets and children away from space heaters.
- Don’t use an extension cord to power the heater, unless it is a heavy duty cord. Always inspect the heater's cord before using.
- If your heater runs on fuel, turn it off and let the heater cool down before refueling. Make sure to only fill the heater with the appropriate fuel.

Information provided by the Burn Prevention Network.
December through February is the most dangerous time for home fires, with nearly 50% of all home fires occurring during these three months. Of those fires, more than 30% are caused by space heaters.

Fires caused by space heaters have a very high reported fatality rate of 81%, as compared to fires caused by fireplaces, which report just 6% of fire related deaths.

According to the National Fire Protection Association, fires caused by space heaters during the past four years accounted for:

- Almost **20,000 fires**
- More than **390 deaths**
- More than **1,130 injuries**
- Property damage in excess of **$460 million**