



# Office of Commissioner of Insurance and Safety Fire

Protect | Enforce | Educate | Inform

**JOHN F. KING**  
*Commissioner of Insurance  
and Safety Fire*

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## ***NEWS RELEASE***

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**For Immediate Release**

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### **KING ISSUES TIPS FOR WINTER WEATHER FIRE SAFETY**

**ATLANTA** – Insurance and Safety Fire Commissioner John F. King issued the following statement today encouraging fire safety during the winter weather months. The week of Dec. 7-11 has been named Winter Weather Preparedness Week by the Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency.

“As cold fronts move in and temperatures drop, Georgians are digging out winter clothes from basement boxes and plugging in their space heaters for the first time in months,” said Commissioner King. “Winter weather can present unique dangers that commonly lead to an increase in reported fires this time of year. The following tips can save lives, prevent property damage, and ensure fire safety in your home during the winter months.”

- Keep flammable materials like bedsheets and blankets 3 feet away from any heat source.
- Extinguish any fire in your fireplace and turn off any space heaters when you leave the area or go to bed.
- Ensure your heater is tested by a recognized testing laboratory, and have your chimney inspected by a professional each year.
- Shop for a heater that has an automatic shut-off if the heater tips over.
- Plug portable heaters directly into outlets without any other item on the same circuit.
- Put fireplace ashes in a metal container with a lid and place the container 10+ feet from your home.
- Keep a glass or metal screen in front of your fireplace and close the doors to your wood stove.
- Do all you can to make sure “on” switches for fireplaces are kept out of a child’s reach.
- Never use an oven to heat your home.
- Leave the heat on and turn your thermostat to 65 degrees if you leave your home for an extended period.

“Especially in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, it’s crucial that Georgians take fire safety seriously so there is not a strain on local fire stations heading into the holiday season,” continued King. “Georgians with questions can always check our website for more tips, follow us on social media, or look at partner agencies like the U.S. Fire Administration. We’re thankful for GEMA, the National Weather Service, and the Georgia Department of Transportation as they promote winter weather preparedness this week.”

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*The mission of the Office of the Insurance and Safety Fire Commissioner is to protect Georgia families by providing access to vital insurance products and safe buildings through fair regulation that creates economic opportunities for all Georgians.*