

**CITY OF OLEAN FIRE DEPARTMENT FIRE PREVENTION MEDIA  
RELEASE  
WOOD STOVES and FIREPLACES**

Do the chilly temperatures have you dreaming of cozy gatherings around a brightly lit fire? Whether your ideal winter retreat is in the warm glow of the family room fireplace or sitting by a fire under the stars, the City of Olean Fire Department says safety should be your first priority. Follow these helpful tips to keep you and your family safe when you use fireplaces and wood stoves:

“Have your fireplace and wood stoves inspected before you begin using them each year,” says Fire Chief Tim Richardson. “Have the chimney cleaned to remove creosote, which can ignite and start a chimney fire.”

Use a tempered glass or metal screen over the fireplace opening to keep sparks inside. Never use papers, trash or liquid fuel. Burn only wood in fireplaces and wood or wood pellets in wood stoves.

Keep anything that can burn at least 3 feet away from fireplaces and wood stoves. The openings can get hot enough to burn skin, so keep children and pets far away from them. When you’re finished with your fire, put it out before you leave home or fall asleep. When you clean up, place the ashes inside a metal can with a lid. Store the can outside, away from the home, until the ashes are completely cold.

Follow these safety tips to prevent injury around fire:

- Never leave children unattended around fire.
- Prevent burn injuries by keeping children at least 3 feet away.
- Store matches and lighters out of children’s sight and reach.
- Never let children see you play with fire.

“Stay alert,” says Chief Richardson. “Watch children closely. Help them if you are roasting marshmallows or hot dogs over the coals. And remember, once cooked they will be hot enough to burn a child’s skin.”