Home Is Where The Heat Is

We depend on our home's heating system to keep us safe and warm. It's important to check and maintain your home's heating system annually to ensure it's operating safely and efficiently. Remember, poor maintenance, damaged or blocked venting, inadequate air flow, as well as other causes can lead to a deadly buildup of carbon monoxide in our homes.

- Have a certified heating contractor inspect your natural gas, propane or oil furnace annually

- Ask your fuel supplier for a list of qualified contractors - to ensure a contractor is registered, call 1-877-682-TSSA (8772) or visit the Technical Standards & Safety Authority (TSSA) website at www.tssa.org

- Inspect and clean your woodstove or fireplace chimney - signs of dark staining, white powder, rust, loose bricks or crumbling mortar indicate it's time to make some necessary repairs

- Check stovepipes and connections to ensure a tight and secure seal

- Check for creosote buildup in stovepipes and chimneys - excessive creosote buildup can lead to a fire - contact a Certified Chimney Sweep

- Check the wall above your fireplace or woodstove when having a fire - excessive heat could be a sign of improper installation and potential fire hazard

- Keep combustibles away from fireplaces and woodstoves - floors and walls should be protected with non-combustible shields - enforce a one-metre safety zone

- When in doubt with any home heating appliance - call an expert!

- Only use space heaters that are certified by Canadian Standards Association (CSA) or Underwriters' Laboratories (UL or ULC)

- Never leave an operating space heater unattended - turn them off before leaving a room or going to sleep

- Supervise children and pets at all times when using a space heater - enforce a one-metre safety zone around your space heater

- If using an extension cord for a space heater, ensure it's the right size and gauge of wire to handle the electrical load drawn by the space heater

- Never use an electrical space heater in a wet area or any area where it can be exposed to water, like a bathroom

- Install carbon monoxide (C/O) alarms outside any sleeping areas of your home - additional alarms can be installed near fuel burning appliances - check the manufacturers' instructions for additional safety information

- Replace carbon monoxide alarms that are more that 5 years old - date of manufacture is noted on the alarm