

New Hampshire State Fire Marshal's Office

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



Date: December 5, 2008
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STATE FIRE MARSHAL WARNS OF WINTER WEATHER HAZARDS

The arrival of the latest winter storm raises safety concerns from State Fire Marshal Bill Degnan. The threat of power outages from the changeover from snow to mixed snow and rain increases the threat of carbon monoxide exposures from the use of generators and alternative heating devices.

Unintentional carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning kills and injures people across the nation and New Hampshire each year. “Heating systems and generators are the most common source of unintentional carbon monoxide poisoning in New Hampshire”, warned State Fire Marshal Bill Degnan, “but carbon monoxide can also be a problem with temporary cooking appliances or space heaters, motor vehicles left running in attached garages or adjacent to a building, generators used during power outages or any other type of fuel burning appliance.

When using a generator have it at least ten feet from your home with the exhaust facing away from the house. Never run a generator inside of any building including a garage with an open door. Carbon Monoxide is the silent killer. You cannot see, taste or smell carbon monoxide, but it can cause severe health problems or death. It is important that everyone have carbon monoxide detectors where they sleep.”

In years past New Hampshire has seen a number of commercial buildings collapse under the weight of the snow. The weight of snow on the roofs of buildings should be monitored and if it appears to exceed what the roof is designed to carry for a load, have a contractor equipped with proper safety equipment for working on roofs remove the snow.

Degnan states that it is critical that every home has at least one smoke detector on each floor level and they are interconnected. Fire Marshal Degnan emphasizes that “every family should develop and practice a home fire escape plan. Smoke detectors should be tested monthly, and matches and lighters should be kept out of the reach of children at all times.”

For further information concerning home fire safety, contact your local fire department or the State Fire Marshal’s Office.