



NEWS RELEASE

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MDFR Offers Cold Weather Safety Tips

(MIAMI, January 6, 2014) – South Florida is bracing for more cold weather and Miami-Dade Fire Rescue Department reminds residents to take the time to prepare for the drop in temperatures.

Follow the “Four Ps”

- **Protect People:** Pay careful attention to children and the elderly. They are especially vulnerable to cold and the least able to protect themselves. Dress in layers of loose-fitting warm clothing, and consider wearing a hat that covers your ears when you are outdoors.
- **Protect Plants:** Bring potted plants indoors. Keep outdoor plants and trees watered. Dry weather and wind create the perfect conditions for brush fires. If you live in or near heavily forested or undeveloped land, keep your property well manicured and free of dry or dead vegetation.
- **Protect Pets:** Bring all pets indoors. Pets that must be left outside should have an enclosed shelter with the entrance facing away from the wind.
- **Protect against fires in the home:** This is one of the most important winter considerations. Take the time to prepare and inspect heating equipment before using. According to the National Fire Protection Association, incorrect use of heating equipment is the leading cause of home fires.
 - Choose electric space heaters and use only those that are UL approved. Look for models that include safety features such as an automatic shut-off when tipped over.
 - Avoid the use of extension cords with space heaters, but if you must use one, make sure it is the proper size and length. Never run cords under rugs or carpets.
 - Keep your heater at least three feet away from furniture, curtains and other flammable items.
 - Install recommended smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, and replace batteries regularly.
 - Never use charcoal or other fuel-burning devices indoors, such as grills that produce carbon monoxide.
 - Make sure all equipment is clean and dust-free.
 - Keep a close eye on children and pets whenever a space heater is being used.

Always turn off heaters when leaving home. This and other safety information is available to the public on the Miami-Dade Fire Rescue Department Web site, www.miamidade.gov/mdfr.

For more information, please contact MDFR's Public Affairs Bureau at [786-331-5200](tel:786-331-5200).

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