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For Immediate Release

AUGUST IS TIME TO INSPECT HEATING EQUIPMENT

With summer winding down and cooler temperatures creeping in, it is time for Alaskan's to ensure that their home heating equipment will operate safely. Many homeowners forget about their heating systems until they use them for the first time each fall.

Malfunctioning and misuse of heating equipment were the leading causes of home fires in Alaska for 2009 and 2010. Malfunctioning heating equipment is also a source of deadly carbon monoxide gas.

Alaska State Fire Marshal David Tyler urges Alaskan's to have their heating system inspected by a certified professional and repaired or replaced as needed. Tyler also reminds Alaskans to follow these tips to safely heat their homes:

- Maintain heating equipment and chimneys by having them cleaned and inspected annually by a qualified professional.
- Install and maintain carbon monoxide alarms to avoid risk of carbon monoxide poisoning.
- Keep combustibles at least 3 feet from heating equipment.
- Supervise children when a fireplace, fire pit, or other space heater is being used.
- Make sure all heating equipment has a label from a recognized testing laboratory.
- Do not use extension cords for portable electric space heaters.
- Use only approved fuel for each type of heater.
- Do not use cooking appliances to heat home.

Tyler adds, "Having working smoke alarms, planning and practicing your fire escape plan and adding residential fire suppression sprinklers can ensure your families safety in case of a devastating home fire".

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