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## NEWS RELEASE

### **Staying Warm and Safe in the Winter: Important Space Heater Safety Tips from the Hinesville Fire Department**

**HINESVILLE, Ga. (January 11, 2019)** – Each month, individual departments from the City of Hinesville will publish important articles that they believe are of public interest. In light of the arrival of colder weather, Captain Andra M. Hart, Public Safety Education Coordinator, of the Hinesville Fire Department would like to share this important public safety message:

December, January and February are some of the coldest months of the year. During these winter months, we often use a many different kinds of heating sources as possible to keep our homes warm. Some of us rely on the use of space heaters as our primary source of heat. Whether you rely on space heaters to warm a bathroom in the morning or a bedroom at night, there are several things to consider.

According to the National Fire Protection Association, heating equipment is the second leading cause of home fires and third leading cause of home fire related deaths. Portable electric space heaters can be a convenient source of supplemental heat for your home in cold weather. Unfortunately, they can pose significant fire and electrical hazards if not used properly. Fire and electrical hazards can be caused by space heaters without adequate safety features. More than half of home heating fire – related deaths result from the heating equipment being too close to things that can burn, such as furniture, clothing and bedding.

Please rely on the following tips to keep your home safe while using heating equipment during the winter months:

- 1) Make sure you read the manufacturer's instructions and warning labels.
- 2) Never leave a space heater unattended. Turn it off and unplug it when you are leaving a room or go to sleep and do not allow children or pets to play too close to a space heater.
- 3) Install smoke alarms on every floor of your home and outside each bedroom. Test your alarms once a month.
- 4) Proper placement of space heaters is critical. Heaters must be kept at least three feet away from anything that can burn.
- 5) Do not place space heaters in high – traffic areas or doorways.



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- 6) Plug space heaters directly into a wall outlet. Never use an extension cord or power strip. Do not plug anything else into the same circuit as the one you are using for the space heater. Doing so could result in overheating.
- 7) Inspect for damaged cords, loose connections and broken plugs.
- 8) Make sure your heater has an auto shut off that will turn the heater off if it is tipped over.

“Space heaters can be effective tools for providing added warmth at home,” Hart says. “It is critical that you follow basic precautions to ensure that they are used properly. Stay safe and warm by keeping these tips in mind.”

**ABOUT THE CITY OF HINESVILLE:**

The [City of Hinesville](http://cityofhinesville.org) was established in 1837 and is recognized as one of the fastest growing cities in the State of Georgia in both size and population. As the largest city in Liberty County, it serves as the county seat and is home to more than 35,000 people. For more information, visit [cityofhinesville.org](http://cityofhinesville.org). To receive News Flash and press release alerts from the City of Hinesville, sign up for the Notify Me service at

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