

MADAWAN MASENYGUN

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HEATING PADS AND ELECTRIC BLANKETS SAFETY

Heating pads and electric blankets cause almost 500 fires each year. Almost all of these fires involve electric blankets that are more than 10 years old.

There are two types of personal heating appliances, heating pads that are placed directly on the mattress and electric blankets. They are not meant to be used inter-

changeably or at the same time.

Safety Tips

}} Look for dark, charred, or frayed spots or one where the electric cord is cracked or frayed. Replace any worn or old heating pad or electric blanket.

}} Do not allow anything on top of a heating pad or electric blanket when it is in use. When covered by anything,

including other blankets or pets, electric blankets may overheat.

}} Never fold electric blankets when in use. Folded or tucked in blankets could overheat and cause a fire.

}} Heating appliances should never be left unattended or used while sleeping.



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TIME TO CHANGE YOUR CLOCKS AND THE BATTERIES IN ALL SMOKE AND CARBON MONOXIDE ALARMS

Clocks will spring forward one hour at 2am on March 12 and the fire department is recommending residents install new batteries in their smoke and carbon monoxide alarms when they change their clocks.

In order for smoke and carbon monoxide alarms to do their job, they need to have working batteries. Once a year, old batteries should be replaced with new batteries. When you change

your clocks on March 12 everyone should the take the time to install new batteries in all alarms."

In order to survive a fire, you need to be provided with an early warning and know what to do when the smoke alarms sound. It's the law to have working smoke alarms on every storey of the home and outside all sleeping areas. For added protection, it is recommended to also install smoke alarms inside all bedrooms.

Carbon monoxide alarms must be installed outside all sleeping areas if your home has a fuel-burning appliance, fireplace or attached garage.

Tampering with or removing the batteries from your smoke and carbon monoxide alarms is against the law. Failure to comply with the Fire Code can result in a ticket for \$360 or a fine of up to \$50,000.

TENANTS AND LEASE SIGNERS LIKELY LIABLE FOR DAMAGE CAUSED DUE TO FROZEN PIPES

QUESTION

About a year ago, a group of my neighbours and I sponsored a refugee family to come to Canada. Two of us signed the lease for an apartment for the family to live in. Everything was fine until this week's cold snap. The family had gone to visit relatives for a couple of days, but had left the bathroom window open an inch. In their absence, the pipes froze and flooded their bathroom and the bathroom and a bedroom in the apartment below. Now the landlord is suing me for the cost of the repairs. Isn't the landlord supposed to carry insurance for accidents like this? Shouldn't the landlord have warned the family not to leave the window open?

ANSWER

Tenants are responsible for repairing and undue damage to the rental unit or complex caused by their wilful or negligent conduct (or the conduct of the tenant's guests).

There is no question that damage resulting from frozen pipes is beyond reasonable wear and tear, and constitutes undue damage. Although the family did not deliberately set out to cause damage, absent some extenuating circum-

stance, their conduct in leaving a window open for more than a very short period of time during freezing weather is negligent conduct.

In this instance, the family and you (and your co-signer) are probably liable to the landlord. If the downstairs tenant suffered a loss due to the flood, you are all likely liable to that person as well. Your landlord may choose to proceed with a claim at the Landlord and Tenant Board for the damages. If the damages are not paid (or a settlement reached) before the hearing, then the Board would likely make an order that the damages be paid, or the tenancy will be terminated. Even if the family vacates, the landlord can pursue them or you for the money.

Although some landlords may warn tenants to avoid leaving windows open, a landlord is under no obligation to warn a tenant against leaving window open in freezing temperatures. People who live in Ottawa are expected to know that. Landlords (and sponsorship groups) may want to warn tenants who come from hot climates about that issue, but it is not negligent for a landlord not to do so.

Your landlord may well have insurance to cover his loss. In such a case, the landlord's insurer will typically pay for the repairs, but then sue (in the landlord's name) to recover the costs. The same may apply to the tenant below if they carry tenant's insurance.

You do not mention having obtained tenant's insurance for the family. If a tenants has such insurance and notifies the insurer of the potential claim within the time limits in the policy, the insurer would most certainly cover the damages or defend the claims.

Tenant insurance is relatively inexpensive, especially when compared to the consequences of not having it when you need it. In Ottawa, a typical tenant insurance policy costs about \$30 to \$35 per month and covers about \$30,000 worth of damage to a tenant's own personal belongings, and \$1 million in property damage or injury which the tenant causes to another person. It can cost more or less depending on a number of factors.

SOURCE: DICKIE & LYMAN LLP WHO PRACTICE LANDLORD/TENANT LAW AND OTHER AREAS OF LAW

WATCH WHAT YOU HEAT

Know What To Do If You Have "A Cooking Fire"

}} When cooking on the stove, keep a proper fitting lid close by.

}} If a pot catches fire, slide the lid over the pot to smother the flames and turn off the stove.

}} Never attempt to move the burning pot.

}} If you have a fire in the oven, turn it off and the door closed.

}} Get out immediately and call 911.

SMOKING & HOME FIRE SAFETY

The place where we feel safest - at home - is where most smoking-materials structures fires, deaths, and injuries occur. Smoking materials are the leading cause of fire deaths. Smoking material fires are preventable.

Smoking Safety

}} If you smoke, use only fire-safe cigarettes.

}} If you smoke, smoke outside. Most deaths result from fires that started in living-rooms, family rooms and dens or bedrooms.

}} Keep cigarettes, lighters, matches, and other smoking materials up high out of the reach of children, in a locked cabinet.

Put It Out

}} use a deep, sturdy ashtray. Place it away from anything that can burn.

}} Do not discard cigarettes in vegetation such as mulch, potted plants or landscaping, peat moss, dried grasses, leaves or other things that could ignite easily.

}} Before you throw away butts and ashes, make sure they are out, and dousing in water or sand is the best

way to do that.

Smoking and Medical Oxygen

Never smoke and never allow anyone to smoke where medical oxygen is used. Medical oxygen can cause materials to ignite more easily and make fires burn at a faster rate than normal. It can make an existing fire burn faster and hotter.

Electric Cigarettes

Fires have occurred while e-cigarettes were being used, the battery was being charged, or the device was being transported. Battery failure have led to small explosions. Never leave charging e-cigarettes unattended. E-cigarettes should be used with caution.

Facts

The risk of dying in a home structure fire caused by smoking materials rises with age. One out of four fatal victims of smoking-material fires is not the smoker whose cigarette started the fire.

Common Causes

}} Spontaneous Ignition - slow buildup of heat in piles of trash and oily rags.

}} Electrical Equipment - light or breaker switches; light bulbs or wiring overheat; faulty wiring.

}} Chemicals - gasoline or alcohol.

}} Smoking - Carelessness with cigarette butts; playing with matches; smoking in bed, etc.

Poor Housekeeping - not using smoke detector; faulty smoke detector; trash storage; dust around electrical equipment, etc.

Common Causes of Fire

}} There are several common causes that might lead to fire to happen.

}} Faulty electrical wiring plugs and sockets, which are overloaded.

}} Electrical equipment left switched on when not in use.

}} Smoking and the careless disposal of smoking materials.

}} Accumulations of rubbish, paper or other materials that are easily ignitable.

}} Combustible materials left too close to sources of heat.

}} Careless use and disposal of flammable liquids.

REPORT AN OUTAGE

Power out?

To report a power outage for information on current outages, please call 24/7 outage line at (613) 738-0188.

Hydro Ottawa relies on customer calls to help pinpoint the cause of an outage and ultimately shorten

their response time and the duration of the outage. There are times when we are unaware of outages until helpful customers notify them.

Quick Tips

If your home is without power, check and see if your neighbours have electricity. If your house is the

only one without power, check your electrical panel. The breakers should be in the "on" position.

Look outside to see if the electrical equipment to your home is damaged or if the service wire is down.

If so, stay away and contact a licensed [ECRA/ESA electrical contractor](#).



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RECIPE OF THE MONTH

Fresh Strawberry Upside Down Cake

Ingredients

2 cups crushed strawberries
1 (16 oz) package strawberry Jell-O mix
3 cups miniature marshmallows
1 (18 oz) package yellow cake mix, batter prepared as directed on package

Directions

(1) Preheat oven to 350°F (175°C)
(2) Spread crushed strawberries on the bottom of a 9x13 inch baking pan. Evenly sprinkle strawberries with the dry gelatin powder, and top with mini marshmallows.

(3) Prepare the cake mix as directed on the package, and pour on top of the marshmallows. Bake in the preheated oven until a toothpick inserted into the centre comes out clean, about 40 to 50 minutes. Cool in the pan for 15 minutes, run a knife around the pan to loosen the sides, and turn the cake out onto a serving tray. Store in the refrigerator.

9-1-1 TIPS FOR MOBILE PHONE USERS

Calls to 9-1-1 are free of charge

Do not pre-program 9-1-1 into your phone's speed-dial function

Dial 9-1-1 only when the safety of people is at risk (e.g. a fire, crime in progress or medical emergency).

Provide your 10 digit phone number so the operator can call you back.

Give your precise location or the location of the emergency.

Describe the emergency clearly.

Stay on the line until the operator tells you to hang up. Then, leave your phone turned on in case the operator calls back.

Be prepared to check on family and neighbours who are especially at risk from cold weather hazards.

IMPORTANT FIRE SAFETY TIPS DURING POWER OUTAGES

To reduce fire risk during a power outage, the Office of the Fire Marshal recommends following the following safety tips: Electrically-connected smoke alarms and carbon monoxide alarms will not work when the power is out. Homeowners should ensure they have battery-operated smoke alarms and carbon monoxide alarms to provide early warning of fire and carbon monoxide.



Wear appropriate outdoor clothing: layers of light, warm clothing; mittens; hats; scarves; and waterproof boots.

COOKING FIRE TIP:

SNUFF OUT A GREASE FIRE BY SLIDING A LID OVER THE PAN



VALENTINE'S DAY

Valentine's Day is a time when people show feelings of love, affection and friendship. It is celebrated in many ways worldwide and falls on February 14 each year.

Family Day - February 13th

Family Day gives families the chance to spend time together.