



# MISSISSIPPI STATE FIRE MARSHAL

**MIKE CHANEY**  
State Fire Marshal

**PRESS RELEASE**

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## **For Immediate Release**

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### **Chaney Stresses Heating Fire Safety, Caution with Fireworks for Fire-Safe New Year**

JACKSON – With colder temperatures due to arrive with the New Year, Mississippi State Insurance Commissioner and State Fire Marshal Mike Chaney stresses fire safety caution in staying warm and celebrating in order to have a fire-safe New Year.

“Fire safety education and preventing fire deaths continue to be priority goals of the State Fire Marshal’s Office. Be sure to use common sense whether it be for heating fire safety or handling any type of fireworks,” Chaney said.

“Every home should have a working smoke alarm. Working smoke alarms can cut the risk of people dying in home fires in half,” he added.

In regards to fireworks Chaney also reminds consumers who choose to use fireworks to be especially cautious where young children are concerned as statistics show children ages 5-9 and teens 15-19 are 2 ½ times more at risk for injury. Sparklers, often a favorite with children, can reach up to 1200 ° Fahrenheit, which is hot enough to cause third-degree burns.

Following these few simple tips from the Mississippi State Fire Marshal’s Office and the National Fire Protection Association can ensure a truly happy and fire-safe New Year.

**FIREWORKS:** for those choosing to use consumer fireworks

• Observe local laws. Those wishing to purchase and use fireworks should first check with their local county and/or fire protection officials to determine that local laws are being followed.

Some municipalities prohibit fireworks from being used within city limits. Additional zoning regulations prohibiting the use of fireworks may apply in non-municipal areas. If you are unsure whether it is legal to use fireworks in your area, first check with local officials.

- Use common sense and always read and follow the directions on each firework.
- Never point or throw fireworks at another person.
- Buy from reliable fireworks sellers. Store them in a cool, dry place.
- Always have an adult present when shooting fireworks.
- Put used fireworks in a bucket of water and have a hose ready.
- Only use fireworks outdoors, away from homes, dry grass, and trees.
- Light only one item at a time and keep a safe distance.
- Never experiment or attempt to make your own fireworks.
- Never re-ignite malfunctioning fireworks.
- Never give fireworks to small children.
- Never carry fireworks in your pocket.
- Never shoot fireworks in metal or glass containers.

**HEATING SAFETY:**

- Have a three-foot “kid-free zone” around open fires and space heaters. Keep things that can burn, such as paper, bedding or furniture, at least 3 feet away from heating equipment.

- Supervise children when a fireplace, fire pit, or other space heater is being used. Use a sturdy, metal screen to prevent contact burns, which are even more common than flame burns.
- Use heating equipment that has the label of a recognized testing laboratory.
- Never use your oven for heating.
- Make sure all fuel-burning vented equipment is vented to the outside to avoid carbon monoxide poisoning. CO is created when fuels burn incompletely.
- Install and maintain carbon monoxide alarms to avoid risk of carbon monoxide poisoning.

### **Portable electric space heaters**

- Turn heaters off when you go to bed or leave the room.
- Use and purchase portable space heaters with an automatic shut off so if they're tipped over they will shut off.
- Place space heater on solid, flat surface.
- Plug power cords directly into outlets and never into an extension cord.
- Inspect for cracked or damaged, broken plugs or loose connections. Replace before using

Should a fire break out in the home, have an emergency evacuation plan for the family to follow and have a designated meeting place for all family members. Once everyone is outside the burning home, call 911 and DO NOT RE-ENTER THE HOUSE UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES!!! (A chart for planning a family escape plan is available on the Mississippi State Fire Marshal webpage.)

Follow the Mississippi Insurance Department (@MSInsuranceDept) and the Mississippi State Fire Marshal's Office (@msfiresafe) on Twitter® for additional fire safety tips during the holidays.