



Weekly Safety Tip

SCI Safety Slogan

Keep safe & cozy this
winter check and
maintain the
furnace!

James Lehrke-SCI

Of the Week

Winter is Just around the Corner Preparing Your House for winter

Although periods of extreme cold cannot always be predicted far in advance, weather forecasts can sometimes provide you with several days' notice. Listen to weather forecasts regularly, and check your emergency supplies whenever a period of extreme cold is predicted.

If you plan to use a fireplace or wood stove for emergency heating, have your chimney or flue inspected each year. Ask your local fire department to recommend an inspector, or find one in the yellow pages of your telephone directory under "chimney cleaning."

Also, if you'll be using a fireplace, wood stove, or kerosene heater, install a smoke detector and a battery-operated carbon monoxide detector near the area to be heated. Test them monthly, and replace batteries twice yearly.

Your ability to feel a change in temperature decreases with age, and older people are more susceptible to health problems caused by cold. If you are over 65 years old, place an easy-to-read thermometer in an indoor location where you will see it frequently, and check the temperature of your home often during the winter months.

Insulate any water lines that run along exterior walls so your water supply will be less likely to freeze. To the extent possible, weatherproof your home by adding weather-stripping, insulation, insulated doors and storm windows, or thermal-pane windows.

If you have pets, bring them indoors. If you cannot bring them inside, provide adequate shelter to keep them warm and make sure that they have access to unfrozen water.

Indoor Safety

Heat Your Home Safely

If you plan to use a wood stove, fireplace, or space heater, be extremely careful. Follow the manufacturer's instructions as well as the home safety measures on page 3, and remember these safety tips:

- Use fireplace, wood stoves, or other combustion heaters only if they are properly vented to the outside and do not leak flue gas into the indoor air space.
- Do not burn paper in a fireplace.
- Ensure adequate ventilation if you must use a kerosene heater.
- Use only the type of fuel your heater is designed to use—don't substitute.
- Do not place a space heater within 3 feet of anything that may catch on fire, such as drapes, furniture, or bedding, and never cover your space heater.
- Never place a space heater on top of furniture or near water.

Life is about choices 24/7

LIVE SAFETY 24/7



When is the last time you changed the furnace filter?

- Never leave children unattended near a space heater.
- Make sure that the cord of an electric space heater is not a tripping hazard but do not run the cord under carpets or rugs.
- Avoid using extension cords to plug in your space heater.
- If your space heater has a damaged electrical cord or produces sparks, do not use it.
- Store a multipurpose, dry-chemical fire extinguisher near the area to be heated.

Protect yourself from carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning by installing a battery-operated CO detector and never using generators, grills, camp stoves, or similar devices indoors. Source: www.cdc.gov

Pre-winter Inspection of Furnaces a Necessity

No matter what the age of your furnace, you can improve energy efficiency by keeping it in good working order. A few simple **furnace maintenance tasks** will ensure you're getting the most for your energy dollar.

Change or clean your furnace filter

When was the last time you changed or cleaned your [furnace filter](#)? Failing to check the filter regularly can be costly: dust and dirt can work their way into the blower and coil assemblies, reducing the furnace's operating efficiency and eventually damaging the motor.

In fact, heating technician say more than half their service calls are caused by simple dust and dirt clogging up vital motor parts!

Most dealers recommended changing disposable filters once a month, or cleaning reusable filters every other month.

Clear outdoor exhaust vents

During the winter, be sure to clear snow and ice away from the intake and exhaust vents outdoors. If the vents become blocked, dangerous carbon monoxide fumes can back up into the house, and the furnace could shut down.

Learn more about:

[Furnace Filters](#)

Schedule an annual tune-up

An annual checkup by a service technician is also a good idea - especially if you have a natural gas system. The technician will check the flues and temperature settings, examine the heat exchanger for cracks, and check the safety mechanisms.

A \$50-\$100 annual tune-up can reduce your heating costs by five percent – and it's the best prevention against deadly [carbon monoxide poisoning](#).

More do-it-yourself maintenance

Other easy ways to keep your furnace running efficient include:

- Check the owner's manual to see if the blower motor should be lubricated. If you have an older heating unit, you might need to add a drop or two to each oil port.
- Replace frayed belts.
- Check flues or vents for cracks or blockages.



A \$50-\$100 annual tune-up can reduce your heating costs by five percent – and it's the best prevention against deadly [carbon monoxide poisoning](#).

- Check the condensate drain to make sure it is properly attached and flowing freely.

Remember to read your owner's manual carefully before doing any maintenance work, and always shut off power at the service panel first.

Source: www.powerhousetv.com

Healthy Eating

- When you need advice, registered dietitians are your best choice for food and nutrition information you can trust. Dietitians can help you translate nutrition science into everyday food choices no matter what your eating style or food preferences. To find a dietitian visit www.dietitians.ca.
- Enjoy eating well, being active and feeling good about yourself. That's vitality.
- A single meal or day of eating rich foods will not make or break an otherwise healthy eating pattern. What you eat on a regular daily basis is what matters most. Enjoy your occasional indulgences but follow a healthy meal plan most of the time.
- Eating breakfast every day can help improve concentration, reduce hunger and maintain a healthy weight. Look for fast and easy choices such as whole grain breads and muffins, cereal with milk, fruit and fruit juice, yogurt and yogurt shakes, cheese, and eggs, or be creative with last night's leftovers.
- Vitamin/mineral pills are not insurance for a poor diet! Only food provides you with great taste and the energy you need to get moving and feel great. Some individuals, including pregnant women, can benefit from supplements. Before taking any supplements talk to a registered dietitian.
- Remember to eat a VARIETY of foods because no single food is perfect. To get all the nutrients you need, enjoy as many different foods as possible from each of the four food groups in Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating.
- Moderation doesn't mean giving up foods you love, it only means having a smaller amount less often. It's not just what you eat, but how often and how much, that really makes the difference.

Keep energized by having regular meals or snacks every 3-4 hours. Keep healthy snack and meal choices handy at work, in the car and at home to avoid settling for something less nutritious. Drink plenty of fluids including water throughout the day. Source: www.dietitians.ca

It's all about choices

We're on the Web!

See us at:

www.safetyconnections.com

Jim Lehrke is President of Safety Connections, Inc., a (safety advisor company), capable of working with businesses of all sizes and types. Our focus is about changing the work culture and focusing on safety first. The result is dramatic reduction of injuries and worker's compensation costs. The bonus is increased productivity and quality.

Safety Connections provides a weekly safety tip at no cost. Workplace safety is a vast area and Safety Connections offers products and services that address all safety aspects. Further, Jim speaks at seminars, does team building training and motivational speaking.

Safety Connections, Inc. is committed to RESULTS. If you're interested in talking with someone from Safety Connections, Inc. please don't hesitate to call us at 920-457-4866.

We want to hear from you! Give us your input on any safety topics you would like to see in SCI's Monthly Newsletter or Safety Tip of the Week. Also let us know how you feel about the new format Drop an email @ jlconnections@aol.com