

For Immediate Release  
Alaska Department of Public Safety  
Alaska Division of Fire and Life Safety

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**Record Setting Cold Weather Spurs Record Setting Fire Fatalities**

The Alaska Division of Fire and Life Safety urges Alaskan's to focus on fire safety in this current cold snap. With record setting low temperatures starting out the New Year, Fire Departments around the state have been busy responding to vehicle and structure fires. Tragically three Alaskan's have lost there lives in three separate home fires in this first week of 2009. This is the highest number of fire fatalities recorded in the first week of the year since 1996. With the record cold and high heating costs, Alaskans must be more vigilant then ever to assure that their homes are fire safe.

Three common causes of fires are:

1. Unattended cooking  
These fires can be prevented by always keeping an eye on what is on or in the stove or other cooking appliance.
2. Heating system malfunction  
These fires can be prevented by ensuring that all heating systems are installed and maintained properly.
3. Combustibles too close to heat sources  
Make sure to keep all combustible materials such as blankets, furniture and clothing are kept at least 3 feet away from all heat sources. Especially space heaters!

The Division of Fire and Life Safety offers fire prevention tips on our website at <http://www.dps.state.ak.us/Fire/TEB/burny.aspx> .

**Working smoke and carbon monoxide alarms are a priority at any time of year.  
This is a great time to test your alarms to make sure they are working.**

For more information call: Mahlon Greene  
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