

Home Heating Safety in Detroit

The M-LEEaD Center's Community Engagement Core (CEC) increases awareness and understanding of environmental health research.

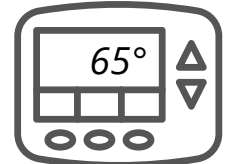
Stakeholder Advocacy Board members include:

- Community Health and Social Services
- The Detroit Health Department
- Detroit Hispanic Development Corporation
- Detroiters Working for Environmental Justice
- Eastside Community Network
- Ecology Center
- We the People of Detroit
- MDHHS
- Sierra Club
- Green Door Initiative

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Keeping safe and warm in Detroit

Home heating is necessary to live in Detroit's cool climate. The city's property maintenance codes require homes to be heated to at least 65°F.¹



However, many struggle to keep their homes warm due to high energy bills and housing issues.² In a survey of home problems faced by Detroiters, 19% said they had broken heating, and 26% said they had poor insulation.²

What are different ways to stay warm at home?

A furnace is the safest way to heat your home, but if a furnace is not enough, broken, or not available, you may want use other options, such as space heaters or wood stoves. You should NOT use your oven to heat your home.

All heating sources come with risk. Knowing how to use them correctly can keep you and your family safe. Find safety tips for different heating systems on the next page.

With any heat source:

- Keep all items **at least 3 feet away**.
- Have large systems **inspected regularly**. This includes fireplaces, whole-home propane heating, and electric and gas furnaces.
- If buying a space heater, make sure it has an **automatic shutoff**.
- Do not leave the heat source unattended. **Turn it off or extinguish flames before going to sleep or leaving the room.**

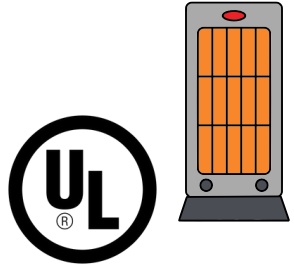


How can I use heating sources safely at home?

These safety tips are adapted from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).³

Space heater (electric, propane, kerosene)³

- Plug portable heaters directly into outlets. Never plug them into an extension cord or power strip.
- Only use portable heaters from a recognized testing laboratory, such as UL. Find a list of NRTLs and their logos here, or at the QR code on the last page: bit.ly/3WQubNv
- If using a propane space heater, never spray aerosols (like spray paint or deodorant) in the same room. Never use the heater to dry clothing.⁶
- Refuel your kerosene heater outside after it has cooled off.



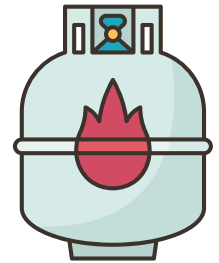
Fireplace & wood stove³

- Put ashes outside in a metal container with a lid, at least 10 feet from your home.
- Keep a glass or metal screen in front of the fireplace to prevent embers or sparks from jumping out.
- Do not burn paper or other items in your fireplace or wood stove.



Propane

- Keep your propane tank in a clear, open space outdoors.⁴
- Install propane/carbon monoxide detectors, and smoke detectors.⁵
- Propane smells like rotten eggs or sulphur. If you smell propane, turn off all open flames and electronics and leave the building. Call your propane servicer, or 9-1-1.⁵
- Regularly check your propane tank for leaks. If you have a scheduled delivery, propane technicians can check the tank for proper functioning and leaks at the time of delivery.⁴



It is dangerous to use an oven to heat your home

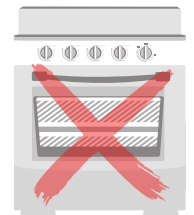
Keeping a gas or electric oven on for a long time can:

- Fill your home with toxic fumes,
- Lead to accidental burns,
- Damage the oven, increasing the risk of fire.⁸

In a 2023 survey, more than **1 in 5** Americans with an annual household income below \$30,000 and a gas range reported using their oven to heat their home.⁷

If you know someone using an oven for heat, make sure they:

- **Understand the dangers**
- Ventilate and open windows regularly to air out the space,
- Keep a fire extinguisher or fire blanket nearby,
- Keep items at least 3 feet away from the oven to prevent fires,
- Set a timer as a reminder to turn off the oven, and
- Do not leave the oven unattended, or turned on overnight.





How can I find heating help?

Detroit residents experiencing heating problems in a rental property can report issues to BSEED at 313-628-2451 or email propertymaintenance@detroitmi.gov

Energy bills: For assistance with gas or electric bills to keep the heat on in your home.

- **Call 2-1-1** for assistance with paying bills.
- **State Emergency Relief (SER) Program** - apply to this program to be eligible for the Michigan Energy Assistance Program (MEAP).
 - Get assistance with your SER application at:
 - Wayne Metropolitan Community Action Agency - Energy & Water Assistance www.waynemetro.org/energy-and-water-assistance/
 - Society of St. Vincent De Paul Detroit - Energy Assistance Programs bit.ly/energybill-help
 - The Heat and Warmth (THAW) Fund - Utility Assistance Programs thawfund.org/assistance-2/
 - emPower - Apply for energy assistance in Michigan tnempower.org
 - Other local organizations are also able to help residents with SER and MEAP applications, call 2-1-1 or visit NewMIBridges.Michigan.gov to find an organization near you.
- **Home Heating Credit** - Offers assistance with heating bills for low-income households. The deadline to apply is September 30th. bit.ly/mi-heatcredit
- **DTE Assistance Programs:** bit.ly/dte-assist

Scan the QR code or follow the link below to find warming centers, resources from this fact sheet, and more information about home heating safety.

Link: linktr.ee/HomeHeatingSafety

