

## **Press-Journal (North Edition)**

# **Fire prevention tips help reduce loss, death**

### **To the Editor:**

This past winter, fires have been devastating and frequent. Recent fires in the news show tragic scenes of personal loss and homelessness. Since the start of this year, there have been 35 large, tragic, U.S.-based fires involving multiple deaths and injuries, with fatalities on the rise. A total of 134 people, 80 of them children, died from those 35 fires.

The increase in residential fires every winter can be attributed directly to the increased use of space heaters, fireplaces and candles. Prevent fires by leaving three feet of clear space around space heaters at all times. Do not leave them unattended. Do not leave open flames unattended, such

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as gas stoves and candles, and keep them free from debris. Replace batteries in smoke detectors and make

sure they are working properly.

As soon as you come in contact with a fire, immediately call your local fire department. Do not, under any circumstance, attempt to put the fire out on your own.

Homeowners and building owners rarely believe that a fire will happen to them and do not take time to prepare or consider fire safety. Fire rates in New Jersey and across the country are rising steadily, making fire a very real and present issue in all our lives. We as a society need to be more diligent and act now to protect ourselves from fire, using fire prevention methods and technologies that are easily available, before a fire occurs and before lives are lost.

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