**November 2026** **Issue 51**

# Emergency Management Department Newsletter

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## Tis the season for holidays, hearths, and home preparedness.

As cooler weather and the holiday gathering season approach, this month's newsletter highlights important cooking and entertaining safety practices. To protect households from heating-related hazards as temperatures drop, remember to inspect furnaces, keep space heaters away from flammable materials, and test carbon monoxide detectors. Additionally, Thanksgiving and winter holidays see a spike in kitchen fires from unattended stoves and fried-turkey mishaps, so clear safety guidelines are essential.

**Cook safely this holiday season...** Deep frying a Thanksgiving turkey has grown in popularity, but safety organizations, including the Los Angeles Fire Department, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, and safety certifier Underwriters Laboratories, warn that traditional turkey fryers present severe fire and injury risks. **View this simulated video**.

Anyone who chooses to fry a turkey must follow outdoor safety guidelines, ensure the bird is fully thawed and dried, maintain constant supervision, and keep a fire extinguisher nearby to avoid turning a holiday meal into a dangerous emergency.

## Preventing House Heating Fires

Home heating equipment accounts for 11 percent of all U.S. residential fires, averaging more than 37,000 blazes annually from 2020 to 2024, according to recent National Fire Protection Association statistics. While these fires total $1.2 billion in yearly property losses, the human cost is heavily concentrated: space heaters and heating stoves responsible for less than half the total fires, caused more than 70 percent of all resulting deaths and injuries.

**Safety should always be your top priority.**
**Ensure you are fully prepared for potential hazards**
**by carefully reading and adhering to the product safety instructions.**

Keep anything that can burn at least three feet from all heat sources, including fireplaces, wood stoves, radiators, portable heaters, or candles.

Always plug space heaters directly into an outlet, and make sure their cords aren't damaged or frayed.

Never use an oven to heat your home. Incomplete combustion produces carbon monoxide, a odorless, colorless, and tasteless gas. Exposure can cause headaches, dizziness, nausea, unconsciousness, and even death.

Maintain heating equipment and chimneys by having them cleaned and inspected each year by a professional.

Visit the U.S. Fire Administration **h**ome fires page to learn about how to prepare for and prevent home fires, including tips for individuals with disabilities and older adults.

Get Winter Ready

## Are you frying your turkey this year?

### Why a turkey fryer can be dangerous:

- Many units easily tip over, spilling hot cooking oil over a large area.
- If the cooking pot is overfilled, or a partially frozen turkey is used, hot and flammable cooking oil will spill.
- Even a small amount of cooking oil coming into contact with the burner can cause a large fire.
- With no thermostat controls, deep fryers have the potential to overheat the oil to the point of combustion.
- The sides of the cooking pot, lid and pot handles get dangerously hot, posing severe burn hazards.

### If you absolutely must use a fryer:

- Turkey fryers should always be used outdoors, on a solid, level surface, a safe distance from buildings and flammable materials.
- Never use a turkey fryer on a wooden deck, under a patio cover, in a garage, or any enclosed space.
- Do no overfill the fryer.
- Use well-insulated potholders or oven mitts when touching pot or lid handles.
- Make sure the turkey is completely thawed.
- Be careful with marinades.

Turkey Fryer Danger - LAFD

Turkey Fryer Fire Safety- FEMA

## Carbon Monoxide: The Invisible Killer

**DID YOU KNOW?**

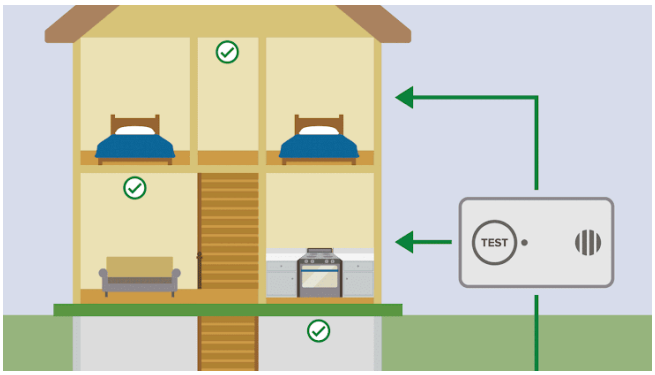
**According to the U.S. Fire Administration and the Consumer Product Safety Commission, more than 150 people in the U.S. die every year from accidental, non-fire-related carbon monoxide poisoning.**

Often referred to as the "invisible killer," carbon monoxide (CO) is a poisonous gas that is completely colorless and odorless. Because human senses cannot detect it, people are frequently unaware when they are being exposed to it.

CO exposure typically happens when fuel-burning equipment, such as heaters, furnaces, or generators, malfunction or fail to vent properly.

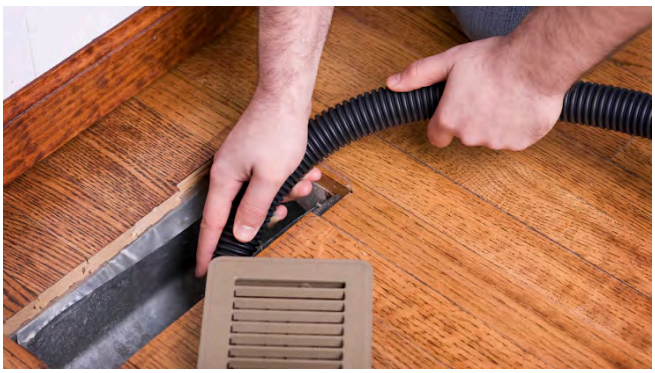
## Learn what you can do to protect your family from the dangers of CO

Install and maintain CO alarms inside your home to provide early warning of CO.




Install CO alarms in a central location outside each separate sleeping area and on every level of your home.

Only use portable generators outdoors in well-ventilated areas away from all doors, windows, and vents.



Make sure vents for the dryer, furnace, stove, and fireplace are clear of snow and other debris.

More About CO Poisoning

# Get Prepared for El Niño

With winter approaching, the City of Los Angeles is urging all residents to prepare early for potential severe weather, heavy rain, and mudslides—especially near recent burn scar areas like the Pacific Palisades. Taking action now can make all the difference, starting with signing up for emergency alerts at NotifyLA.org and checking the LA County Flood Zone Determination website to see if your property requires flood insurance.

Free, ready-to-fill sandbags are currently available at all local LAFD fire stations to help safeguard your home. During active storms, protect yourself by staying off flooded roads and avoiding downed power lines; afterward, use MyLA311, LADWP, or LA Sanitation to report any clogged drains, fallen trees, or power outages.

Also use these resources to prepare for weather hazards, receive real-time alerts, and protect your home and community.

Get Ready Now | Stay Informed | Report Concerns

## Preparing for Power Outages

Severe rainstorms in Los Angeles often lead to power outages that may disrupt cell service, local utilities, Metro transit, neighborhood stores, and home medical devices. Preparing your home and emergency supplies before the rain hits is essential.

- Keep fridge/freezer closed.
- Toss out perishable food held above 40°F for 2 hours.
- Run generators strictly outside, clear of open windows.
- Unplug electronics and appliances to guard against power grid surges.
- Do not use gas stoves for heat,
- Secure backup power or refrigeration for essential medical needs.

# Public Health Hub

As the holiday season begins and winter weather approaches Los Angeles, taking proactive steps toward health and emergency preparedness helps safeguard the entire community. Protect loved ones during holiday events by staying up to date on seasonal vaccines, getting tested if you feel unwell, and improving indoor ventilation. Prevent foodborne illness by thawing meats in the refrigerator and refrigerating perishables within two hours.

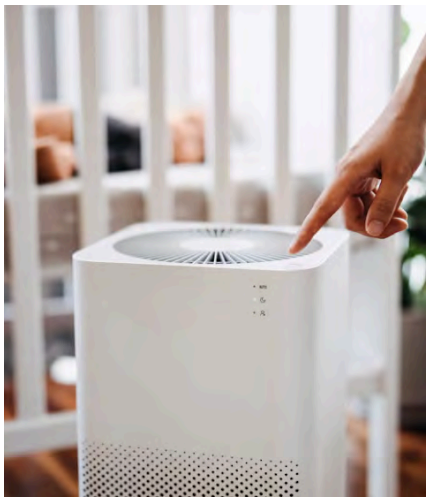
Cold snaps and storm-related power outages also pose unique health risks. Plan ahead by keeping medical devices charged, maintaining a 30-day supply of essential medications, and securing backup power or refrigeration for temperature-sensitive supplies. As winter approaches, be sure to check in on neighbors, friends, and members of the Disabilities, Access, and Functional Needs (DAFN) community who may need extra support staying safe, warm, and prepared.

Respiratory Viruses Safety

## Trending in Public Health

Food Safety

Storm & DAFN Safety



Guide to Air Cleaners

## Mental Health Resources

**Stress & Coping:**
**Tips for Families**

**Learn how to Manage Your Emotions; Why That Matters?**

**Managing Family Stress During Holiday Gatherings**

This section of the newsletter aggregates information from the City of Los Angeles, LA County Public Health, and government partners. For official mandates, refer to the linked primary sources. This content is for informational purposes only and is not medical advice.

This newsletter has been created for you by the Community Partnerships and Engagement Division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