



# How to Heat Safely

**When prices are high, it can be tempting to cut corners. Here's how to do it right.**

TODAY'S ENERGY PRICES, and everything else, are on the rise and everyone is looking to save money. There are many ways to save money safely, and many others that put the homeowner at risk. Here are some dos and don'ts concerning your home and business energy needs.

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**Question**  
**1**

# Is your storage vessel safe?

## Essential Oil Tank Info

**Make sure your tank meets federal safety standards.**

Your oil tank should be a UL-approved tank for fuel oil storage. A vertical oil tank should rest on a cement pad and horizontal tank should sit on four concrete blocks on a gravel or crushed rock base. Homemade oil tanks made from 55-gallon drums or nonferrous containers are not only hazardous; they're against the law.

Have your tank checked for structural integrity on a regular basis. Metal oil tanks will rust from the inside due to condensation buildup over the years. A ruptured tank not only causes an environmental hazard, but also undetected can be a health hazard to your family if there is seepage into a drinking water source.

Oil from a ruptured vessel is a fire hazard. Remember, this product is designed to burn, and an ignition source in the proximity of a spill can initiate a fire in your home or business.

## Propane Storage Primer

**Location is everything.**

Propane storage tanks have to be set according to very specific federal and state codes. They



must be on a noncombustible base, such as a cement pad or blocks, and not subject to frost heaves. Never completely enclose propane tanks inside—they must be outdoors.

They must be five feet away from any opening to the house and any source of ignition such as

an electrical entrance or dryer vent. Keep your propane tank at least 10 feet away from the outlet of a direct-vent appliance.

Most propane tanks are owned by their supplier, and their delivery person will inspect the tanks during each delivery.

## Safekeeping:

Propane storage tanks must be on a noncombustible base, such as a cement pad or blocks, and not subject to frost heaves. Never completely enclose propane tanks inside—they must be outdoors.

## WHAT IF YOUR OIL TANK LEAKS?

If you join our **Tank Protection Plan** you're covered. Webber can save you time and money and frustration! Webber Energy offers you full protection against the cost of repair and/or replacement of your oil tank. That's Webber's way of continuing to provide its customers with unique programs and assurance that there is added value in doing business with the Webber family of companies.

To enroll in our Tank Protection Plan and receive your fuel tank guarantee, call our office at 888-932-2371 and ask to speak to one of our Customer Service representatives. This program is automatically renewed each year in September and your account will be charged accordingly. One billing covers you for a full 12 months.

**Webber**  
ENERGY FUELS

*You won't ever have to think about it again!*



**Question  
2****Is your heating system safe?****Heating Unit Health**

**Call a licensed technician for an annual checkup.**

All heating units should be checked every year. An inspection will include a cleaning and adjustment of the unit and a once-over of all parts and controls for safety and efficiency.

For those with a warm air furnace, your heat exchanger should be checked for failure points, which can emit exhaust fumes into your home. If a homeowner notices a dark streaking at the area near the warm air registers they should call to have that checked immediately. This could indicate a failed heat exchanger.

**Smoke Pipe Precautions**

**With the cost of fuel this winter, wood and pellet stoves are being used more than ever.**

To forego exhaust gasses entering your home, have your smoke pipe checked for rust and other potential failure points. The chimney

**One Appliance, One Flue:**

Maine code provides for only one appliance connected to one flue. Adding a wood or pellet stove to a flue already in use with an oil or propane appliance is illegal in Maine.

should also be inspected by a chimney sweep annually for blockage or cracking of the liner.

All smoke pipes must be a minimum of 24 gauge metal and secured with fasteners. Maine code provides for only one appliance connected to one flue. Adding a wood or pellet stove to a flue already in use with an oil or propane appli-

ance is illegal in Maine.

Chimney flues are sized to specific appliance outputs and overloading the flue can create a backup of exhaust gasses into the home. An annual checkup can eliminate potential dangers in the heating system and should be scheduled before the heating season begins.

**Question  
3****Is your home safe?****Stowed Away Safely:**

All fuel cans and propane cylinders should be stored in a separate storage shed, never in a basement.

**Combustibles Care**

**One moment of carelessness can create a lifetime of grief.**

Some issues we have seen over the years are combustibles stored next to the smoke pipe. These combustibles include cardboard boxes, gas grilles, gasoline cans, newspapers, and other hazardous items.

All fuel cans and propane cylinders should be stored in a separate storage shed, never in a basement thus entrapping the fumes and creating an explosion hazard. Any heat producing unit from a furnace to a hotplate should be clear of all combustible materials.

**Safe Vent-Free Heating**

**Be wise when adding supplemental warmth.**

- **KEROSENE HEATERS:**

The use of vent-free heaters as supplemental heat is another

winter heating concern. Kerosene heaters are common, but many users do not allow for adequate ventilation when in use. These units use air from the room for the combustion process. When the room is sealed up tight, the possibility of suffocation increases with extended use. A window should be cracked open or some source of make up air should be provided.

#### ■ PROPANE HEATERS:

Propane vent-free heaters, except in specific units, are not designed to be used as a sole source of heat. All propane units designed for indoor use have an oxygen depletion sensor (ODS) built into their ignition design to shut the unit down in a low oxygen situation. We still advise that the homeowner provide for make up air. The ODS is a mechanical part and subject to unexpected failure. Brakes can fail as can safeties on firearms, so never place 100 percent confidence in an ODS.

If a propane heater doesn't have an ODS built into it, it is not designed for domestic use. These are meant to be used only in well-ventilated areas similar to construction or recreational use.

#### ■ AND REMEMBER:

When you are being talked into a vent-

free heater at the corner store, no vent-free heater may be used in a bedroom or bathroom in the state of Maine. While some states do allow this, we agree completely with this law solely on a basis of safety for the homeowner. This has proven to be deadly over the years and is a prime example of "a little knowledge is a dangerous thing."

## Used Equipment Advice

### Buyer beware.

Be very careful of buying used equipment or "off the rack" at a big box store or mail order business. Never install heating equipment without checking with a licensed and experienced heating technician.

## Final Words of Wisdom

**The best advice for a safe home is common sense.** Don't try to go it alone: Consult with an experienced professional if you have any questions on home safety with your heating system. A Webber Energy Fuels heating specialist from any of our locations can visit your home or business to do a preliminary survey of your heating system and safety concerns.



## Fresh Air Needed:

When the room is sealed up tight, the possibility of suffocation increases with extended use of a vent free heater. A window should be cracked open or some source of make up air should be provided.



The **WEBBER WATCHDOG PROGRAM PLAN** includes complete coverage of your oil or propane heating system, oil tank, and monitoring of your home for low temperatures, burner failure, and low fuel supply.

Webber Energy Fuels will automatically schedule your annual inspection and take care of all other service problems for the year at no extra charge. When you consider that a tank replacement can run around \$2,000 and a boiler replacement a minimum of \$5,000, this is the best insurance plan for your heating system today.

As an added benefit, some insurance companies recognize the value of the Watchdog plan so much that they offer a discount on homeowner's insurance to Webber customers with the Webber Watchdog plan. What better way to potentially save money and ensure that your heating system is safe and efficient?

**At Webber Energy, we have numerous resources to assist you. Call us at 888-932-2371 or visit our website at [www.webberenergy.com](http://www.webberenergy.com) to arrange for a heating specialist to visit you.**