Important Cold Weather Safety Tips

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As we are experiencing increasingly bitter cold temperatures earlier than usual, it is ever important to stay vigilant in protecting yourself and your family from the frigid weather. Below are the top ten cold weather safety tips from the American Red Cross:

1. Layer up! Wear layers of lightweight clothing to stay warm. Gloves and a hat will help prevent losing your body heat.

2. Don't forget your furry friends. Bring pets indoors. If they can't come inside, make sure they have enough shelter to keep them warm and that they can get to unfrozen water.

3. Remember the three feet rule. If you are using a space heater, place it on a level, hard surface and keep anything flammable at least three feet away - things such as paper, clothing, bedding, curtains or rugs.

4. Requires supervision - Turn off space heaters and make sure fireplace embers are out before leaving the room or going to bed.

5. Don't catch fire! If you are using a fireplace, use a glass or metal fire screen large enough to catch sparks and rolling logs.

6. Protect your pipes. Run water, even at a trickle, to help prevent your pipes from freezing. Open the kitchen and bathroom cabinet doors to allow warmer air to circulate around the plumbing. Be sure to move any harmful cleaners and household chemicals out of the reach of children. Keep the garage doors closed if there are water lines in the garage.

7. Better safe than sorry. Keep the thermostat at the same temperature day and night. Your heating bill may be a little higher, but you could avoid a costly repair job if your pipes freeze and burst.

8. The kitchen is for cooking. Never use a stove or oven to heat your home.

9. Use generators outside. Never operate a generator inside the home, including in the basement or garage.

10. Knowledge is power. Don't hook a generator up to the home's wiring. The safest thing to do is to connect the equipment you want to power directly to the outlets on the generator.