**Southwest Area Emergency Management**

**Winter Weather Safety Series**

**Heating and Cooking During Winter Storms**

**Heat your Home Safely:**

If you plan to use a wood stove, fireplace, or space heater, be extremely careful. Follow the manufacturer’s instructions and remember these safety tips:

* Use fireplace, wood stoves, or other combustion heaters only if they are properly vented to the outside and do not leak flues gas into the indoor air space.
* Do not burn paper in a fireplace.
* Ensure adequate ventilation if you must use a kerosene heater.
* Use only the type of fuel your heater is designed to use—don’t substitute.
* Do not place a space heater within 3 feet of anything that may catch on fire, such as drapes, furniture, or bedding, and never cover your space heater.
* Never place a space heater on top of furniture or near water.
* Never leave children unattended near a space heater.
* Make sure that the cord of an electric space heater is not a tripping hazard but do not run the cord under carpets or rugs.
* Avoid using extension cords to plug in your space heater.
* If your space heater has a damaged electrical cord or produces sparks, do not use it.
* Store a multipurpose, dry-chemical fire extinguisher near the area to be heated.
* Protect yourself from carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning by installing a battery-operated CO detector and never using generators, grills, camp stoves, or similar devices indoors.

**Cook Safely:**

* Never use a charcoal or gas grill indoors—the fumes are deadly.
* Never use an electric generator indoors, inside the garage, or near the air intake of your house because of the risk of carbon monoxide poisoning.
* Plug in appliances to the generator using individual heavy-duty, outdoor-rated cords.
* Do not use the generator or appliances if they are wet because of the risk of electrocution.
* Do not store gasoline indoors where the fumes could ignite.