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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CAN YOUR ASHES!  
Residents with wood burning heating appliances may apply for a free ash can**

As the temperature drops outside and we think about using our fireplaces and heating stoves, it's important to remember a few safety tips and precautions. Heating equipment and improper ash disposal are leading causes of home fires during the fall and winter months.

Be warm and safe this season and consider following these safety tips:

- Have heating equipment, chimney and stove inspected and cleaned by a certified chimney sweep every fall just before heating season.
- Allow ashes to COOL before disposing of them. Four days or 96 hours is the minimum recommended cooling period for ashes.
- Place completely cooled ashes in a covered metal container. Keep the container at least 10 feet away from the home and other buildings. They should **NEVER** be disposed of in a plastic garbage box or can, a cardboard box, or paper grocery bag. Never use a vacuum cleaner to pick up ashes.
- The metal container should be placed away from anything flammable. It should not be placed next to a firewood pile, up against or in the garage, on or under a wood deck, or under a porch.
- After sitting for a week in the metal container, check them again to be sure that they are cool. If so, the ashes are then safe to dispose of in your trash.
- As a safety precaution keep anything that can burn at least three feet away from a fireplace, wood stove, or any other heating appliance, and create a three-foot "kid-free zone" around open fires. It is important to make sure the fireplace has a sturdy screen to stop sparks from flying, and never leave a fire unattended, particularly when children are present.

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To obtain a free ash can, residents may fill out an application, available at the Fire District Administration Office, 866 Oriole Way, Incline Village. If the required criteria are met, an ash can will be provided. Inside each ash can, residents will find instructional flyer on how to properly dispose of fireplace ashes. Ash cans will be provided to qualifying residents on a first come, first serve basis.

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