**PRESS RELEASE**

Top tips to fire up your gas heater to keep the cold at bay

**13 July 2021:** With the South African Weather Service (SAWS) warning about sub-polar weather conditions affecting most parts of the country this week, many families will turn to gas heaters to keep warm. [ASP Fire CEO](http://www.aspfire.co.za) **Michael van Niekerk** gives us his ‘top tips’ on what to do when you switch your appliance on for the first time after a long storage, as well as some of the safety factors to be on the lookout for.

1. **When connecting a gas appliance to the gas cylinder, always ensure that the connection is correct and gas-tight** – a smell of gas will occur if the connection is not tight.
2. All gas appliances have rubber or fibre washers to seal the gas tightly at the point of connection to the gas cylinder. It is important to always **check that these washers or seals are in place and in good condition**.
3. It is essential to **keep the gas jets clean**. Inspect these for dust and dirt before any appliance is connected to the cylinder.
4. When turning the LPG on, **turn the valve only one-and-a-half times**. When lighting gas appliances without automatic ignition, first light a match or lighter, hold it to the gas burner and then open the gas. The gas will ignite immediately.
5. Even on the coldest winter nights, it is important to **always have a window slightly open in any room where a gas appliance is being used** to ensure that fresh air is readily available.
6. When turning the appliance off for the night, **shut off the gas supply at the LPG cylinder**, which should always be placed on a firm and stable surface.
7. **Store and transport gas cylinders upright with a sealed protective cap** to prevent any damage and potential leaks if they fall over; secure gas cylinders in a clearly demarcated and protected area.
8. Use gas containing an **odour-causing substance that can be detected in the event of any leaks**; install a gas detector.
9. Another critical safety factor in terms of gas cylinders is to **protect these from any external heat sources**. Pressure and temperature have a direct relationship in terms of the fixed volume. As the temperature increases, so does the pressure. If you exceed the maximum temperature that the cylinder is rated for, there will be an explosion.
10. Although homeowners do not require certification in order to operate gas cylinders, **any gas system must be installed by an accredited company**.
11. Lastly, and most importantly, take care when using a gas heater: **Do not place it too close to items like furniture, curtains or bedding that can catch fire**. If you have an electric heater follow the same rules when using a gas heater, but remember to unplug it from the wall socket during load shedding so that it does not come on when the power is restored if the switch is accidently left on.

***Ends***

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**Notes to the Editor**
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**About ASP Fire**
ASP Fire operates across the entire African continent from its Gauteng base, providing professional, accredited fire risk management and support to its clients. ASP Fire designs, installs and maintains a full range of fire detection and suppression equipment suited to clients’ needs. ASP Fire provides a holistic, proactive and preventative fire solution based on integrated fire risk assessment, training and consulting, with the installation and maintenance of fire detection and suppression systems that meet SABS, NFPA, FPASA, FDIA and SAQCC standards.

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