

## WINTER SAFETY

As we prepare to enter the winter season here in Wyoming I thought it might be a good idea to review winter safety requirements and recommendations. First off portable space heating devices are prohibited in all health care occupancies unless **both** of the following criteria are met: (1) Such devices are used only in nonsleeping staff and employee areas, and (2) The heating elements of such devices do not exceed 212 degrees Fahrenheit or 100 degrees Celsius.

Another concern during the winter months is maintaining means of egress from the facility to the public way. Snow and ice must be removed from the sidewalks and walkways immediately after any snowfall to ensure residents and staff can safely egress from the facility. This includes making sure the egress doors to the outside freely open and are not blocked by snow or ice buildup.

Lastly, almost all carbon monoxide (CO) poisonings and deaths occur during the winter months when fuel burning devices are active, and most buildings are closed up tight from the cold weather. Neither the 2012 NFPA Life Safety Code nor the State of Wyoming requires CO detectors in health care occupancies, but it is recommended that at least one CO detector be placed near the facilities' fuel burning equipment.

If you have any questions or concerns about winter safety please contact Bill Alexander at 307-777-7123 or by email at [bill.alexander@wyo.gov](mailto:bill.alexander@wyo.gov).