



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Gainesville, TX — January 28, 2026

Structure Fire Caused by Portable Heater

Gainesville, TX — Gainesville Fire-Rescue responded to a residential structure fire early this morning, January 28, 2026, in the 300 block of N. Taylor Street.

A child inside the residence called 9-1-1 to report the fire. Three residents and two dogs were able to safely escape before firefighters arrived. The cause of the fire was a portable heater being used underneath the home in an attempt to defrost frozen pipes. Gainesville Fire-Rescue crews quickly extinguished the fire. While damage was limited, the outcome could have been catastrophic.

Community Risk & Emergency Management Specialist Tamara Sieger reminds residents that space heaters must be used with extreme caution. “Portable heaters should never be placed under homes or near combustible materials. Using alternative heating methods, such as using ovens or stovetops to heat a home, are strongly discouraged.”

Safe Heating Tips to Prevent Home Fires

Residents are urged to follow these important safety guidelines to prevent home fires:

- Keep heaters at least three feet away from anything that can burn, including furniture, bedding, and people
- Use heaters equipped with a thermostat and overheat protection
- Place heaters on a solid, flat surface
- Ensure heaters have an automatic shut-off feature if tipped over
- Keep heaters out of walkways and never block exits
- Keep children and pets away from space heaters
- Plug heaters directly into a wall outlet; never use extension cords
- Turn off and unplug heaters when leaving the room or going to bed
- Inspect heaters before use for damaged plugs, frayed cords, or loose connections
- Never operate a portable generator inside a home or garage, even with doors or windows open
- Operate generators outdoors, at least 20 feet away from doors and windows
- Test smoke and carbon monoxide alarms regularly to ensure they are working properly

Gainesville Fire-Rescue urges residents to take heating safety seriously, especially during periods of extreme cold, to help prevent fires and protect lives.

Gainesville Fire-Rescue

Gainesville Fire-Rescue exists to protect lives, property, and render aid to citizens and visitors of Gainesville, TX by providing excellent customer service through fire suppression and rescue activities, medical first responder services, public safety education, emergency management, and fire prevention activities.

Press Contact

Tamara Sieger, Community Risk & Emergency Management Officer
Public Information Officer

tsieger@gvps.org

www.gainesville.tx.us

940-668-7777 X 5731