

Birds and Fireplace Safety Tips

Keep your bird safe this winter with these fireplace safety tips

By Susan Chamberlain

Birds have sensitive respiratory systems. Take extra precautions if you are using a gas fireplace to stay warm this winter. Courtesy Christine Gonzales, Nevada

Bird Safety Tip 1: Purchase a fireplace with electronic ignition rather than a pilot light to save fuel and to reduce combustion pollutants in your home.

Bird Safety Tip 2: Never burn anything other than the prescribed material in the fireplace.

Bird Safety Tip 3: Use the fireplace only as supplemental heat. Do not use it for more than several hours at a time. Never go to bed and leave the fireplace burning. Non-vented gas fireplaces are not generally approved for use in bedrooms.

Bird Safety Tip 4: Be sure your bird does not have access to the fireplace. Keep it safely caged when the fire is burning.

Bird Safety Tip 5: Install at least one carbon monoxide detector and smoke detector in your home. If you smell gas or suffer from symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning (headaches, dizziness, coughing, drowsiness experienced at home), the Consumer Product Safety Commission advises you to open the windows, turn off combustion appliances, leave the building and call for help. Contact a doctor for diagnosis and treatment.

Bird Safety Tip 6: If you have a gas range, use a range that vents to the outdoors.