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**NEWS RELEASE - 2014-02**

**For Immediate Release: February 19, 2014**

**For Further Information, contact Fire Chief Howard Rice, Jr. at 207-781-2610**

**Falmouth Fire-EMS Asks Residents and Business Owners to Clear Snow from Vents**

With more snow falling, Falmouth Fire-EMS is asking all residents, property managers and business owners to keep gas appliance intake and exhaust vents clear from snow and ice. Recent snowfall has led to situations where these areas have been blocked from the heavy snow accumulation and from tall snow drifts. A blocked intake or vent can lead to a possible hazardous condition such as the buildup of carbon monoxide gas and can also cause the appliance, such as a gas furnace or hot water heater, to malfunction. Falmouth Fire-EMS is also asking residents with propane tanks to keep a path clear to the tanks so that in an emergency the fire department can access the tanks. Be sure to use caution when plowing or shoveling near a propane tank. When clearing snow or ice from a gas meter residents should use a broom or even their hands to keep from damaging the meter.

Symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning include headache, nausea, vomiting and loss of coordination. If anyone is feeling these symptoms they are encouraged to leave the immediate area to get to fresh air and call 9-1-1.

Falmouth Fire-EMS recommends residents use carbon monoxide detectors on every level in their house. Falmouth Fire-EMS is offering free battery-powered smoke and CO detectors to Falmouth residents through a grant from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security that the department received along with the Scarborough Fire Department and the Maine Center on Deafness. Falmouth and Scarborough residents can call (207) 730-4298 to request the detectors.

End of release.

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