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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Winter Is Coming – Have Your Heating Checked By A Licensed Contractor For Carbon Monoxide Leaks And Other Issues

AUSTIN – If your natural gas or propane heating system has stopped venting carbon monoxide and burned gases to the outside where they can safely dissipate, would you know? It's important that you have your system checked by a licensed air conditioning and heating contractor evaluate your system each fall.

Carbon monoxide is a colorless, tasteless and odorless gas that can be deadly in high concentrations. If your home isn't equipped with combination smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, be sure install them before the first norther comes swooping down.

Detectors should be placed outside all sleeping areas in a residence heated with natural gas or propane. Symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning may include a dull headache, weakness, and dizziness. Higher concentrations will induce nausea, vomiting, shortness of breath, confusion, blurred vision, loss of consciousness, and death.

"Checking whether your contractor is licensed, and that the technician servicing your equipment is registered with TDLR, is an important step in protecting yourself from shoddy and dangerous work," said William Weatherly, TDLR Air Conditioning & Refrigeration Program Chief. "Licensed contractors and registered technicians have undergone a criminal background check and have had the required training. Licensed contractors have passed a comprehensive exam and complete yearly continuing education classes."

The first step in hiring an air conditioning and heating contractor should be checking the TDLR website (www.tdlr.texas.gov) to make sure that they are licensed by TDLR. Once you've confirmed that the contractor is licensed through TDLR, here are several things they should be inspecting in your heating system:

- 1) Air Handler & Furnace (Natural Gas, Propane)
 - Check gas connection for leaks. Improperly operating gas connections are a fire hazard and a health concern.
 - Check gas pressure and proper burner combustion. Improper gas pressure and/or a dirty burner will cause equipment to operate less efficiently.

- Check the heat exchanger for cracks and a proper flue connection. A cracked heat exchanger or Improper flue connection can leak deadly carbon monoxide into living spaces.
- 2) All Systems
 - Check incoming power and tighten connections as necessary.
 - Check thermostat and system controls for proper operation and sequence.
 - Check air handling unit for proper air flow.
 - 3) Heat Pump & Electric Heat Systems
 - Check heat pump heating cycle and reversing valve operation.
 - Check “emergency heat” operation, which is energized if heat pump fails or is in defrost cycle.
 - Check electric heat strips for proper operation when system is energized.
 - 4) General
 - Listen for abnormal noise and search for source of unusual odors.
 - Clean and inspect blower assembly.
 - Older units: lubricate motor and replace fan belt if applicable.
 - Replace filters and educate customer on efficient operation
 - Clean coils.

About TDLR

TDLR provides regulatory oversight for a broad range of occupations, businesses, facilities, and equipment in Texas, including the Texas Lottery and Charitable Bingo programs. The agency protects the health and safety of Texans by ensuring they are served by qualified, licensed professionals. Inspections of individuals, businesses, and equipment are done on a regular basis to safeguard the public. Currently, the agency regulates 41 business and occupational licensing programs with more than 1,000,000 licensees across the state.

Visit TDLR’s [website](#) for more information and resources. You can search the [TDLR licensee database](#), and also find [past violations](#) in which a final order was issued against companies or individuals. TDLR’s Customer Service line is available anytime between 8 a.m. until 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, at 1-800-803-9202. TDLR representatives are fluent in English, Spanish and Vietnamese.