Government safety experts warn that half and one-third of the injuries resulting from portable electric heater fires occur when people use heaters overnight and the family is sleeping. If heaters must be used at night, a properly installed and maintained smoke detector in the same room may provide early warning of danger if a fire should occur.

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission estimates for 1985 indicate that fire departments responded to 3,700 residential fires involving portable electric heaters. These fires resulted in 160 deaths, 260 injuries and \$50.6 million in property loss.

CPSC suggests the following precautions for safe portable heater use: Use heaters at least three feet

away from objects such as bedding, furniture and drapes. Never use heaters to dry clothes or shoes. Do not place heaters where towels or other objects could fall on the heater and start a fire.

Use heaters on the floor. Never place heaters on furniture, since they

omy and its farmers aren't the only

losers in the increasing battle to keep

the family farm alive. The state's

wildlife-especially small game-is

and managers and small-game hunt-

ers in this state, and throughout the

southeast, have been asking them-

selves, "Where have all the rabbits

and quail gone?" Now, they're get-

worry about whether we're losing a

lot of our traditional farm land, espe-

cially in the Piedmont, because

farmers can't afford to stay in busi-

ness," said Terry Sharpe, small-

game project leader for the N.C.

Wildlife Resources Commission. "In

the past, we've taken advantage of

the fact that small-game has been a

natural by-product of agriculture

since most farm land provides good

cover for small animals ... expecially

quail and rabbits. Now, we're going

to have to develop a new philoso-

phy...as farming goes, so goes small-

Last month, small-game experts

from 13 southeastern states came to

North Carolina at the invitation of

Gov. James G. Martin and the N.C.

Wildlife Resources Commission to

discuss the decline of small-game

"We know there have been popula-

North Carolina Power and the

North Carolina Division of Aging

have formed a joint program to help

The public-private effort, based on

a model project operating in Wash-

ington state, was announced at a

news conference in Raleigh by Phil-

lip J. Kirk, Jr., Chief of Staff to Gov-

ernor James G. Martin; David T.

Flaherty, Secretary of the Depart-

ment of Human Resources; and

James R. Frazier, Jr., North Caro-

lina Power Vice President. Rep-

resentatives of the state's other ma-

jor electric utilities -Duke, CP&L

and Nantahala Power-announced

plans to implement pilot Gatekeeper

programs in their respective service

Noting that the program is known

'In North Carolina, we need to

In recent years, wildlife biologists

suffering too.

ting some answers.

game.

populations.

need help.

may fall, dislodging or breaking parts in the heater.

Do not use heaters in wet or moist places such as bathrooms, as parts in the heater may be damaged.

String out cords on top of rugs or floors. Placing anything on top of the cord could cause the cord to over-

Do not use an extension cord unless absolutely necessary. Using an extension cord with high wattage appliances can start a fire. If you must use an extension cord, it must be marked 14 or 12 AWG; this tells the thickness or gauge of the wire in the cord. For example, a cord sold as an air conditioner extension cord will have these heavy wires. Do not use a cord marked 16 or 18 AWG. Only use extension cords bearing the label of an independent testing laboratory such as U.L. or E.T.L.

Be sure the plug fits snugly in the outlet. Since a loose plug may overheat, have a qualified repairman replace the worn out plug or outlet. Since heaters draw lots of power, the

pressure since more people are hunt-

ing deer," Sharpe said. "But the peo-

ple who still hunt small game, live for

small game in their back yard," he

said. "Now, they have deer in their

back yards. Deer are just more plen-

tiful, and many hunters are going to

spend their time hunting whatever

"We found out our problems are

even more similar than we imag-

ined," Sharpe said of North Caroli-

na's neighboring states. "We agreed

that to manage high small-game pop-

ulations, we have to do something to

disturb the soil...such as controlled

burning, plowing, farming, and cut-

During the Southeaster Small

Game Workshop held in August at

Carolina Power and Light's Environ-

mental Center near Raleigh, more

than 100 biologists and wildlife man-

agers exchanged ideas on how to re-

Brad Mueller of the Tall Timber

IN Florida, said changes in land uses

make it difficult for small-game

"If you go to a place where you

used to hunt quail, and there's a sub-

division on it, you'll see your small-

game problem," Mueller said.

"We're also finding higher popula-

hunters to find their resource.

store rabbit and quail populations.

will make them successful.

ting back bushes.

Research Station

"Years ago, people could hunt

Raleigh-North Carolina's econtion declines and changes in hunting

cord and plug may feel warm. But if the plug feels too hot to touch, unplug the heater and have a qualified repairman check for problems. If the heater and its plug are found to be working properly, have the outlet replaced. Using a heater with a hot cord or plug could start a fire.

If a heater is used on an outlet protected by a ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) which trips, do not assume the GFCI is broken. Because GFCIs protect locations where leakage currents can cause a severe shock, stop using the heater and have it checked, even if it seems to be working properly.

Broken heaters should be checked and repaired by a qualified appliance service center. Do not attempt to repair, adjust or replace parts in the heater yourself.

To report a product-related accident, consumers may call the CPSC toll-free hotline at 800-638-2772. The teletypewriter line for the hearing impaired is 800-638-8270.

Farm losses lead to wildlife losses

got the techniques for better managing land. We've just got to use them.' Sharpe agreed. "For rabbits, research shows they

tions of small-game predators. We've

need a wide variety of cover," he said. "Farmers and other landowners need to try to provide such cover as honeysuckle and blackberry.

"Food plots are a part, but not the complete answer for the quail problem. We need to look at each farm individually. District biologists in North Carolina are available to give advice to people who want to manage their land for wildlife. We may see a new attitude-the person who works for quail on his land will have it. But, I'm afraid that may price a lot of people out of quail hunting.'

Billy Minser of the University of Tennessee said "No-till" farming helps to save cover for small wildlife.

During an address last week to members of the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies in Winston-Salem, Gov. Martin hailed the no-till farm practice as an ideal way to manage wildlife and prevent soil erosion.

"We don't anticipate any miracles or immediate solutions," Martin said of the cooperative efforts from southeastern states. "But we are very hopeful that this workship and studies that are developed through it will lead us to solutions that can help restore our small game populations."



Local students from the high school are potting plants in the high school's greenhouse. The students are studying Agriculture, and the plants are for sale to area residents.

Alternative minimum tax outlined

Once upon a time, only the very wealthy had to be concerned about the alternative minimum tax (AMT) but the Tax Reform Act of 1986 has changed that.

More Taxpayers than ever are expected to be affected by the alternative minimum tax for a number of reasons. First, the general cut in individual tax rates increases the likelihood that the AMT will exceed a taxpayer's regular taxes. Second, Congress has added several new tax 'preference" items that must be included when computing the AMT Lastly, losses from passive investments must be added to your taxable income for AMT purposes even though, during the phase-in period, certain taxpayers can still partly claim these losses when computing their regular taxes. Some experts predict that four times as many people will be subject to the AMT as a result of these changes.

For those unfamiliar with the alternative minimum tax, the North Carolina Association of CPAs offers this explanation, "The alternative minimum tax is an alternate way of calculating one's tax liability and determining the minimum amount of tax that must be paid by those taxpayers who have successfully reduced their regular tax liability." The alternative minimum tax is the government's way of ensuring that at least some taxes are paid by those taxpayers who minimize their tax liability by taking advantage of tax preferences. The AMT must be calculated without the benefit of many of the tax breaks available under the regular

DID YOU KNOW?

than 50,000 nuclear weapons in

existence. The U.S. nuclear testing

program costs about \$700 million

been spent on nuclear weapons de-

velopment.

year. More than \$100 billion has

• The U.S. House of Represen-

tatives has already voted to end

nuclear testing as long as the

Soviets don't test. Satellite and on-

site monitoring technology makes

to My Senator

42 of our underground tests

have vented radiation into the at-

mosphere. Fallout from one test in

Nevada was detected in Minnesota

and Canada as reported in a House

· Right now Congress is debat-

ing the nuclear testing issue. Legis-

lators are watching their mail care-

fully. If you have an opinion, send

a letter or postcard to your Senator,

U.S. Senate, Washington, D.C.

If you haven't thought about it,

why not look into more of the facts

for yourself. You can obtain infor-

mation on nuclear testing by writ-

ing West Side SANE/Freeze, 165

W. 86th St., New York, N.Y. 10024.

Commerce Committee study.

LIBBY RAD T

the test-ban verifiable

Currently there are more

At first glance, the process might appear simple. You compute your taxes twice-once the standard way and again using the AMT. But, in actuality, understanding the rules and doing the necessary calculations are quite complex and a matter you might want to refer to a tax expert. But a basic understanding of the AMT and careful planning may help you save dollars by ascertaining that investment strategies taken to save tax dollars are not diluted by the alternative minimum tax.

The AMT applies to a broader base of income than that used under regular tax rules. Using Form 6251 to compute the alternative minimum tax, you start with your adjusted gross income, increase it by tax preference items and reduce it by only certain deductions and exemptions. Among those items deductible when computing the AMT, are casualty, theft and gambling losses, charitable contributions, medical expenses to the extent they exceed 10 percent of your adjusted gross income and certain qualified interest expenses.

By contrast, state and local income taxes, real estate taxes, miscellaneous itemized deductions and consumer interest are some of the items not deductible in computing the AMT. The AMT allows an exemption of \$40,000 for married couples filing jointly and \$30,000 for singles. After you've adjusted your alternative minimum taxable income by the proper exemption, multiply it by 21 percent (up from 20 percent last year) to arrive at the AMT amount. If the alternative minimum tax is greater than your regular income tax, the IRS requires you to pay the AMT.

Higher income taxpayers should note that, starting with 1987 tax years, the exemptions referred to are reduced by 25 cents for each dollar that the alternative minimum taxable income exceeds \$112,500 for individual filers and \$150,000 for joint returns. There is no exemption once income reaches \$232,500 on an individual return and \$310,000 on a joint

The Tax Reform Act retained previous tax preferences, modified some and added several new ones. The following is a list of some of the more common tax preferences, beginning with the three newest:

New Fall Goods

Arriving Daily!

vestment activities: The untaxed gain of post-December 31, 1986 charitable contributions

of appreciated property (carryovers arising from contributionsmade be fore August 16, 1986 are not subject to the AMT);

Net losses from certain passive in-

Tax-exempt interest from certain private-purpose municipal bonds issued after August 7, 1986;

The excess of the fair market value of the stock received upon exercising the option over the exercise price (For purposes of the AMT, gain or loss on a subsequent sale of the security will be determined by increasing the basis by such exces amount);

The excess of accelereated depreciation over what would have been allowed under the straight-line method for real property placed in service before 1987:

The excess of the current write-off of intangible drilling costs (IDC) over the amount that would be de-

using 10-year amortization (or allowable cost depletion) to the extent that it exceeds 65 percent of the taxpayer's net oil and gas income;

Mining exploration and development expenses require an adjustment for the difference between the amount expensed and the amount that would be deducted had the expense (incurred or paid after December 31, 1986) been amortized over 10

years.

None of the general business cred its can reduce an individual's AM'. liability. Foreign tax credits, however, will be allowed against the AMT subject to certain limitations. The new law does, however, provide for a new minimum tax carry-forward credit, which will be allowed only against regular tax liability. The credit is for the amount of post-1986 minimum tax liability relating to exclusion preferences (those that have to do with the timing of income and deductions rather than permanent differences). The credit will be available to offset future years' regular tax. Unused credits may be carried

If you think you might be subject to the alternative minimum tax, a fax expert can help determine what steps you might be able to take to avoid the tax or soften the blow.

forward indefinitely.



Quality Clothing

"OH, MY GOSH IT'S TIME TO GO BACK

TO SCHOOL"



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CANCE & EXCERCISE APPAREL

W.A. "Billy" White MAYOR OF HERTFORD **NOVEMBER 3, 1987**

PAID FOR BY S.A. WHITE

make many of the state's elderly a "The utility companies are institutlittle more secure. Under the program known as Gatekeeper, company meter readers will team with local agencies to determine when elderly customers may

vate sector."

serve." he said.

month blooming season.

January until mid-April.

Gatekeeper program outlined ployees will "open the gates" between older citizens and sources of assistance, Kirk praised the effort.

ing the Gatekeeper Program in regions they serve," he said. "This is a great public service to our older adults and their families and I thank you (utility companies) from the bottom of my heart. We in state government cannot do everything for our growing population of older adults. We welcome the assistance of the pri-

Flaherty praised the public spirit of the companies involved, saying that they are showing their concern for their neighbors. "Good neighbors

a majority of the elderly population in Northeastern North Carolina, the company is in a unique position to act as a link between participating senior citizens and local agencies. "Our meter readers make regular visits to every home in every community we serve," Frazier said. "They get to know the neighborhoods they work in and the folks who live there.

company is training its meter readers to be especially alert for signs of distress and neglect-piled up mail or newspapers, unkept lawns, broken windows or anything else out of the ordinary. If they notice something unusual, they report it to local agency officials so they can investi-

Senior citizens who want to participate in the program can enroll by filling out one of the Gatekeeper enrollment cards being sent out with North Carolina Power bills in October. Others who know of a senior citizen who could benefit from the program are also invited to fill out and

return one of the forms.

watch out for each other," he said. Frazier said that North Carolina Power is pleased to be working with the North Carolina Division of Aging in offering this service to the compa-

ny's senior citizen customers. "We view the Gatekeeper program as another opportunity to show our concern for the neighborhoods we Since North Carolina Power serves As part of the program, the utility

soms as the Dutch type and multiply

faster. By combining the snow spe-

cies and the Dutch types, it is possi-

ble to have two months of crocus

Miniature hyacinths are known as

Roman hyacinths. The pink and

white types bloom first, the blue va-

rieties in March. For bulbs that are

clear blue, the choise is Siberian sq-

uill, with one to three starlike blos-

In March the Dutch crocuses

bloom, as well as the Greek ane-

mones and grape hyacinths. Other

little bulbs that bloom include minia-

ture daffodils, the native wild flowers

of the Piedmont, Erythronium or

dog-toothed violets, the varieties of

small iris and the later atamasco li-

These cheery little bulbs will add to

soms on 6-inch stems.

the spring garden.

blooms.

as Gatekeeper because utility em-Little bulbs suggested for gardens

The advantage of planting the little

bulbs is that they are exceptional for

close viewing. Beside a wooded path,

at a gate or doorway and in rock gar-

dens, they beg to be examined. By

choosing varieties by blooming

dates, it is possible to have these

little blossoms in the garden from

Yellow winter aconites bloom in

January. The blossoms face upward

with green leaves acting as a frame.

The flowers last up to two weeks, but

the foliage is attractive until May. If

the location agrees with these bulbs,

Crocuses start blooming in Jan-

uary and early February. The more

familiar, later blooming varieties

are Dutch crocuses. There also are

species crocuses, called snow cro-

cuses, that have twice as many blos-

they will reseed and naturalize.

LITTLE BULBS N.C. Botanical Garden

When making decisions about next spring's blooms, specialists at the N.C. Botanical Garden at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill say gardeners should consider adding "little bulbs" to their usual favorites.

Little bulbs are low-growing plants with miniature blossoms, good color variety and the potential for a four-

Preparing for the SAT Test: Strategies for Success

Competition is tough for the three million high school seniors who apply to college each year. Even students with a high grade point average can improve their chances of being accepted by the college of their choice with a high Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) score. Here are three tips from leading authority, Gary R. Gruber, Ph.D., on how to improve test results.

· Brush up on math. A refresher can help polish some valu-

Students studying for the SAT may want to look for the highly rated "Gruber's Complete Preparation for the SAT," published by Harper & Row. The book teaches the Critical Thinking Skills method, includes a math refresher, methods to improve vocabulary and practice SAT tests.

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