

# TENNESSEE STATE FIRE MARSHAL'S OFFICE



## MONTHLY FIRE PREVENTION AND PUBLIC FIRE EDUCATION PLANNING GUIDE 2014-2015

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# **TENNESSEE STATE FIRE MARSHAL'S OFFICE**

## **Monthly Fire Prevention and Public Education Plan 2014-2015**

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### **MISSION STATEMENT**

*"The State Fire Marshal's Office is committed to protecting the safety of Tennesseans and their property through fire prevention, education, codes enforcement, regulation, investigation and law enforcement."*

Historically, Tennessee's fire mortality rate for civilians has been among the highest in the nation. The State Fire Marshal's Office (SFMO) is on a mission to change that. The purpose of this document is to provide a 52-week public fire education program as a guide for SFMO fire prevention activities. It is also provided to local fire departments and officials across the state to promote a statewide coordinated fire prevention effort. This plan is anticipated to help in the fight to reduce and prevent fire related fatalities that occur each year in our state.

### **Tennessee Fire Prevention Facts**

1. Last year, Tennessee had a fire dollar loss of \$267,980,314 million. TN fire departments responded to 20,350 fires, which included 8,231 structure fires that damaged \$226,580.6 million of property. 121 fire fighters were injured, and one fire fighter died in 2013. 215 unintentional civilian structure fire injuries and 98 unintentional civilian structure fire deaths were reported. 48.98% of structure fire reports lacked sufficient information to determine cause. 37.8% of fatalities resulted from fires of unknown origin.
2. Close to 99% of fire deaths in 2013 were in residential occupancies.
3. Properly installed and maintained smoke alarms are considered to be one of the least expensive and most effective means of providing an early warning of a potentially deadly fire and could reduce the risk of dying from a fire in your home by almost half.
4. The state's fire incident reports for 2013 indicated that smoke alarms were present in only 33% of fatal fire cases. Increasing the presence of smoke alarms in Tennessee households increases the possibility that more lives can be saved from fire danger. However, there are also documented cases where working smoke alarms did not alert occupants, or occupants were affected by smoke and gases before smoke alarms activated.
5. According to NFPA, the combination of working smoke alarms and home fire sprinklers lowers the risk of death from fire by more than 80%. The fire death rate for people 85 and older is five times the national average. People with a physical or mental disability are more than twice as likely to die in a fire.

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6. Similar to the nation, the state's residential fire victims tend to be the very young and the very old. Members of each of these groups die in fatal fires in proportions that exceed their size in the population.
7. The Tennessee fire chiefs who responded to a statewide survey in 2011 thought that the top four strategies to prevent and reduce residential fire deaths were (1) smoke alarm distribution and installation, (2) having home sprinkler systems, (3) enforcing applicable codes and (4) presenting fire safety demonstrations and instruction at local schools. In open-ended comments, most fire chiefs thought that the single best approach to reducing fire deaths was to ensure that all structures, residences included, have working smoke/fire alarms.

In Tennessee during 2013,

A fire department responded to an alarm every minute and a half.  
A fire department responded to a fire every 2 hours, 19 minutes.  
One structure fire was reported every 56 minutes.  
One home structure fire was reported every hour and 21 minutes.  
One accidental home fire injury was reported every 46 hours.  
One accidental home fire death occurred every 3 days, 17 hours.

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### BACKGROUND

In 1923, the Fire Prevention Division, also known as the State Fire Marshal's Office, was established by the Tennessee General Assembly. At that time under the Department of Insurance and Banking, the division was tasked to prevent and investigate fires. The mission of the Fire Prevention Division has been widely expanded and is now under the Tennessee Department of Commerce and Insurance. The seven sections within the Fire Prevention Division are Administrative Services, Bomb and Arson, Codes Enforcement, Contract Inspection Services, the TN Fire and Codes Enforcement Academy, Tennessee Commission on Firefighting and Manufactured Housing.

In Tennessee, there have been many attempts to improve fire prevention efforts dating back to 1948 when President Harry S. Truman conducted the nation's first Conference on Fire Prevention. Tennessee was one of 34 states that set up a "Fire Safety Committee" and one of 18 states that held a statewide fire prevention conference.

*"Governor Jim Nance McCord called a Statewide fire prevention conference, which was held at Nashville on April 26, 1948. Dr. Andrew D. Holt, conference chairman, State Fire Marshal James M. McCormack, and Leon McGilton, chairman of planning committee, organized a most successful conference, which provided for permanent Statewide activities, to be guided by a committee appointment by the Governor."*

*"Governor McCord personally participated in the conference, delivering an address which was broadcast throughout the State."*

..... From The Truman Report

President Truman was also quoted in the report as saying:

***"Safety from fire should not be a topic for discussion during only one or two weeks of the year. It is definitely a year-round public responsibility. I believe that the highest State and Municipal officials must assume greater responsibility for leadership in this field. We in the Federal Government can give aid within the framework of existing agencies. But the impetus must come from the States and from every community and every individual in the land."***

..... From The Truman Report

As a result of the national conference, a publication was distributed called, "A Guide to Community Organization for Fire Safety." This publication summarized a coordinated fire prevention program for use by state and local organizations in promoting fire safety.

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This year's "Monthly Fire Prevention and Public Fire Education Planning Guide" is the fourth annual publication the State Fire Marshal's Office is providing as part of a committed effort to improving fire prevention. Fire prevention must be considered a year-round process; and this document serves as a tool to identify target areas where fire deaths are predicted, and also to provide a coordinated program of public fire education to reduce fire related deaths. The guide is provided to fire departments and other organizations each year as a new progressive public education program that is committed to assisting fire service leaders across the state.

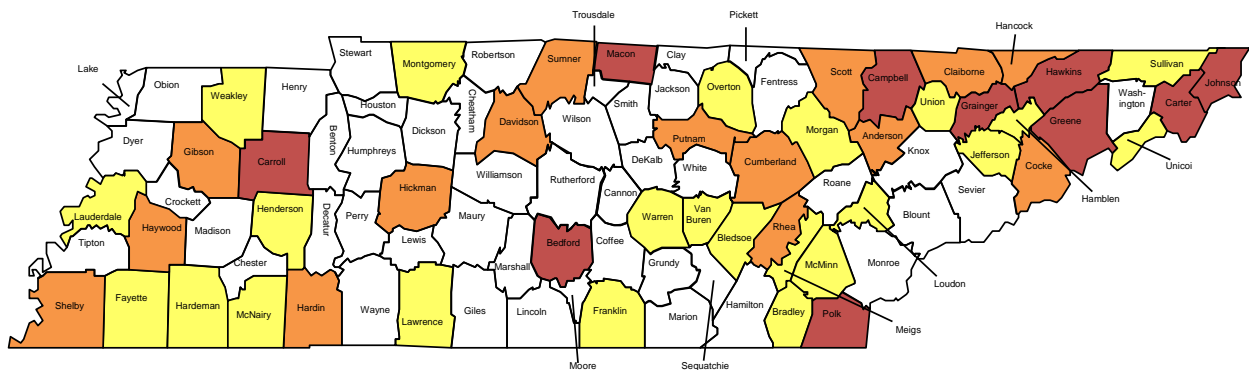
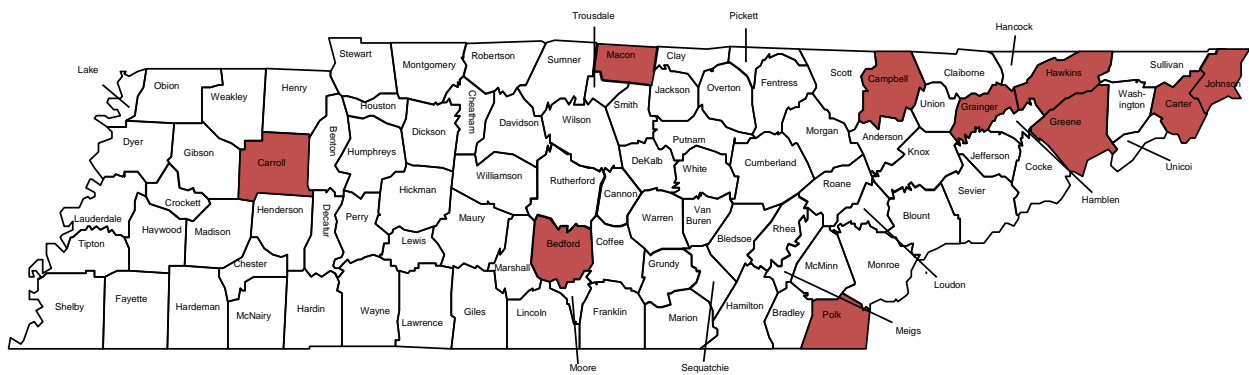
Please share the "**SFMO Monthly Fire Prevention and Public Fire Education Planning Guide (2014-2015)**" with other fire departments, community groups, and the general public.

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**TARGET COMMUNITIES FOR ACTIVITIES**

45.2% of all households in highest risk census tracts are located in the 10 counties identified below:

- Bedford County**
- Campbell County**
- Carroll County**
- Carter County**
- Grainger County**
- Greene County**
- Hawkins County**
- Johnson County**
- Macon County**
- Polk County**



- More than 3,500 households in highest risk census tracts (Top 10)
- More than 2,300 households in highest risk census tracts (Top 25)
- Households in highest risk census tracts

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The goal for the 2014-2015 Statewide Public Fire Education Program is to target each of these census tracts with the public fire education program. While working with the local fire departments, the goal is to accomplish the following in each of the targeted areas:

1. Provide resources to assure that all residential structures have working smoke alarms.
2. Educate and promote what to do in the event of a fire. In particular, promote using escape plans and practice exit drills.
3. Provide information on how residential fire sprinklers can save your life.
4. Provide local fire departments with resources to conduct door-to-door public education programs including offering home fire safety surveys.
5. Promote the public fire education messages that are specific to each community.
6. Establish community involvement and awareness about fire safety with local officials.
7. Provide outreach to high risk populations within the targeted areas.
8. Use local media and other technology to reach high risk targets.



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### **2014-2015 SFMO Theme: “It’s Fire Safety Time in Tennessee”**

The fall season each year brings on many changes. It’s when the leaves turn, the weather cools, and football is so popular both at local high schools as well as on a state level. This is also a time when the fire mortality rate climbs in Tennessee. As the weather becomes colder, heating sources are used more, and fire deaths in structures typically rise. As of October 1, 2014, Tennessee has suffered 47 accidental civilian fire deaths in structures this calendar year. There were a total of 98 accidental structure fire deaths reported during calendar year 2013. Our hope is to see a lower amount of fire fatalities for 2014 than that of the previous year.

The Tennessee State Fire Marshal’s Office, through the process of setting strategy and goals, has placed the mission to reduce the Tennessee fire mortality rate as its top priority. Every employee, regardless of what they do, plays a role in achieving this mission. We are pleased to report that in the past three years there has been a 23% reduction in Tennessee fire fatalities. That’s the greatest reduction in the history of the State Fire Marshal’s Office!

So with football in the air and a committed effort to enhance the safety of Tennesseans, the yearly theme for the state’s 2014-2015 fire prevention efforts is...

### ***“It’s Fire Safety Time in Tennessee”***

This message will continue to be promoted throughout the next 12 months in an effort to support fire prevention in the most comprehensive effort ever in Tennessee. The SFMO is now using data from fire reports, news media articles, death certificates, bomb and arson section reports, insurance reports, and other means to track the fire mortality rate. Maps developed by the University of Tennessee utilizing GIS technology to analyze social economic conditions and fire mortality data collected over the past 10 plus years are being studied to pinpoint target areas. Until now, this technology has never been used to predict where future fire deaths are likely to occur. The targets are specific – not only locally identified, but are developed from census tracks at the street level. Special emphasis will be placed on these areas with individualized programs developed to address local issues.

The majority of the public education topics used to support this program are from the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) publication titled, “NFPA Educational Messages Desk Reference.” These seventeen topics are introduced into monthly plans from existing state and local sources. The result is a comprehensive public fire education plan or guide for use by state and local officials.

Please utilize the information provided to promote fire prevention and life safety measures. The participation of local and state resources is critical in reducing the fire mortality rate in Tennessee.

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### **Understanding the Impact of Fire and Life Safety Messages on Children**

By the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA)

#### Overall conclusion and recommendations for safety programming:

For both younger and older children watching positively framed videos was more effective than watching negatively framed videos. Parents also rated positively framed videos as more effective. Thus, safety messages should focus on depicting the positive outcomes that result from engaging in safety behaviors. Communicating safety messages by depicting the negative consequences of unsafe behaviors were not as effective as communicating the positive outcomes of safe behavior.

When parents discuss media content with their children, children learn more. These parental mediation effects were maximized when parents were provided with discussion guidelines. When parents were simply asked to discuss the videos with their children, without being given specific guidelines on how to do so, outcomes were less favorable.

Parents need assistance with how to discuss media content with their children.

Overall, findings from this research suggest that the impact of safety messages on children will be greatest when messages are framed positively, parents are encouraged to discuss these messages with children, and parents are provided with discussion guidelines.

Even though this study used parents (or legal guardians), the findings also will likely generalize that teachers and other adults who discuss media content with children fall under the same recommendations. Thus, if safety videos are to be developed for use in schools, our findings indicate that such videos should be accompanied with guides to assist teachers.

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## **OCTOBER 2014**

### **EVENTS:**

- National Fire Prevention Month
- SFMO Fire Prevention Week Kick-off Event
- SFMO Poster Contest
- Halloween
- National Fallen Firefighter Memorial Weekend

### **THEMES:**

**SFMO Annual Theme: "It's Fire Safety Time in Tennessee"**

**SFMO Monthly Theme: "Working Smoke Alarms Save Lives"**



**"Working Smoke Alarms Save Lives"** For this year's campaign we'll be spreading the word that when there is fire, smoke spreads fast. You need working smoke alarms to give you time to get out. Test yours every month!

### **October 2014 Topics**

Week 1 – Prevent Kitchen Fires

Week 2 – Smoke Alarms

Week 3 – Home Fire Sprinklers

Week 4 – Halloween Safety

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### **State Fire Marshal's Office Annual Poster Contest**

State officials and local fire departments across Tennessee will be promoting participation in the fire prevention poster contest. The local community school children will be creating posters based on the national fire prevention theme of the year. They will be judged on a local level and the winners from each participating community will be turned into the state for judging. The state contest will be held in December. A state winner for each grade level K-12 will be chosen, as well as 1 winner from each of the two special needs divisions (Division I: K-5<sup>th</sup> grade & Division II: 6<sup>th</sup> -12<sup>th</sup> grade). All winners and their families will get to attend the state awards banquet held in 2015.

### **National Fire Service History**

- October 19, 1857 – Chicago Building Collapse (10 firefighters killed)
- October 8-9, 1871 – Great Chicago Fire (300 deaths)
- October 8, 1871 – Great Peshtigo Fire (1152 deaths)
- October 28, 1954 – PA Chemical Tank Explosion (12 firefighters killed)
- October 26, 1962 – New York Building Collapse (6 firefighters killed)
- October 17, 1966 – New York Mercantile Building Fire (12 firefighters killed)

### **Tennessee Specific History**

- October 22, 1930 – Tennessee Fireman's Association formed

## **NFPA PUBLIC EDUCATION RESOURCES**

### **Smoke Alarms**

*The State Fire Marshal's Office wants all Tennesseans to have working smoke alarms in their homes. Through the "Get Alarmed" program, the SFMO aims to supply local fire departments with 10-year battery smoke alarms to install for members of their community. **See supplemental information section for more details.***

#### 1.1 Fire Deaths — Smoke Alarms Save Lives

1.1.1 Working smoke alarms save lives, cutting the risk of dying in a home fire in half. Smoke alarms should be installed and maintained in every home.

#### 1.2 Installation

1.2.1 Smoke alarms should be installed in every sleeping room, outside each separate sleeping area, and on every level of the home, including the basement. Larger homes may require additional smoke alarms to provide a minimum level of protection.

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1.2.2 For the best protection, interconnect all smoke alarms throughout the home. When one sounds, they all sound.

1.2.3 If you sleep with the bedroom door closed, install smoke alarms inside and outside the bedroom. For the best protection, make sure all the smoke alarms are interconnected.

1.2.4 Wireless battery-operated interconnected smoke alarms are now available.

1.2.5 An ionization smoke alarm is generally more responsive to flaming fires, and a photoelectric smoke alarm is generally more responsive to smoldering fires. For the best protection or where extra time is needed to awaken or assist others, both types of alarms or combination ionization and photoelectric alarms, also known as dual sensor smoke alarms, are recommended.

1.2.6 Choose a smoke alarm that has the label of a recognized testing laboratory.

1.2.7 Smoke alarms should be installed away from the kitchen to prevent false alarms. Generally, they should be at least 10 feet (3 meters) from a cooking appliance.

1.2.8 A smoke alarm installed between 10 and 20 feet (3 and 6 meters) of a cooking appliance must be a photoelectric type or have a hush feature, which temporarily reduces the sensitivity of the alarm.

#### 1.3 Testing and Maintenance

1.3.1 Test smoke alarms at least once a month using the test button.

1.3.2 Make sure everyone in the home understands the warning of the smoke alarm and knows how to respond.

1.3.3 To keep smoke alarms working well, follow the manufacturer's instructions for cleaning. The instructions are included in the package, or can be found on the internet.

#### 1.4 People Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

1.4.1 Smoke alarms and alert devices, called accessories, are available for people who are deaf or hard of hearing. Strobe lights throughout the home are activated by smoke alarms and alert people who are deaf to fire conditions. When people who are deaf are asleep, a high-intensity strobe light is required along with a pillow or bed shaker to wake them up and alert them to fire conditions so they can escape. This equipment is activated by the sound of a standard smoke alarm.

1.4.2 Smoke alarm alert devices, called accessories, are available for people who are hard of hearing. These accessories produce a loud, mixed low-pitched sound. This

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equipment is activated by the sound of the smoke alarm. People who are deaf may find that a pillow or bed shaker is also helpful to wake them up.

1.4.3 Recent research has shown that a loud, mixed low-pitched sound is more effective for waking people of all ages than the loud high-pitched sound of a traditional smoke alarm. As people age, their ability to hear high-pitched sounds decreases.

1.4.4 Choose smoke alarms and accessories for people who are deaf or hard of hearing that have the label of a recognized testing laboratory. Research the available products and select one that best meets your individual needs.

1.4.5 Some alarms are now designed to assist those who cannot climb onto ladders or stools. The alarms can be tested using a television remote.

#### 1.5 Battery Replacement

1.5.1 Smoke alarms with non-replaceable (long-life) batteries are designed to remain effective for up to 10 years. If the alarm chirps, warning that the battery is low, replace the entire smoke alarm right away.

1.5.2 For smoke alarms with any other type of battery, replace batteries at least once a year. If that alarm chirps, replace only the battery.

#### 1.6 Smoke Alarm Replacement

1.6.1 Replace all smoke alarms when they are 10 years old.

1.6.2 Immediately replace any smoke alarm that does not respond properly when tested.

1.6.3 Combination smoke-carbon monoxide alarms should be replaced according to the manufacturer's recommendations.

#### 1.7 Rental Units

1.7.1 All rental units need working smoke alarms.

1.7.2 Check with your local fire department for state and local ordinances on smoke alarm installation and maintenance in rental units:

*In Tennessee, it is the responsibility of the owner/landlord of the rental property to install a smoke alarm in each living unit. It is the responsibility of the tenant to maintain the smoke alarm (however, upon termination of a tenancy, the owner shall ensure that any required smoke alarm is operational prior to reoccupancy). Citations are Tenn. Code Ann. §§ 68-120-112, 68-102-151(b)(1) and 68-102-151(d)(1). **See supplemental information section for more details.***

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1.7.3 If you rent and do not have working smoke alarms, contact your landlord or property manager immediately about having alarms installed.

1.7.3.1 If, after you have contacted your landlord or property manager, smoke alarms remain uninstalled, contact your local fire or building department. Some fire departments will install smoke alarms for you.

1.7.4 If a smoke alarm is not working, the battery or the smoke alarm itself may need to be replaced. The responsibility for maintenance of the smoke alarms may be the responsibility of the landlord or the renter, depending on the rental agreement. Maintain the smoke alarm in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

1.7.5 Test smoke alarms at least once a month using the test button or other means such as the mute button on the television remote, if the alarm has that feature.

1.7.6 Make sure everyone in the home understands the warning of the smoke alarm and knows how to respond.

1.7.7 Dust or vacuum smoke alarms annually and/or whenever the battery is changed. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for cleaning.

### **Prevent Kitchen Fires**

Cooking is the leading cause of home fires here in Tennessee and nationwide. The majority of cooking fire stem from unattended cooking. Two of every five home fires begin in the kitchen—more than any other place in the home. Cooking fires are also the leading cause of home fire-related injuries. Cooking fires can be prevented!

#### **Cooking – General Info**

##### **7.1 Stay Alert**

7.1.1 To prevent cooking fires, you must be alert. You won't be alert if you are sleepy, have consumed alcohol, or have taken medicine or drugs that make you drowsy.

##### **7.2 Watch What You Heat!**

7.2.1 The leading cause of fires in the kitchen is unattended cooking.

7.2.2 Stay in the kitchen when you are frying, grilling, or broiling food. If you leave

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the kitchen for even a short period of time, turn off the stove.

7.2.3 If you are simmering, baking, roasting, or boiling food, check it regularly, remain in the home while food is cooking, and use a timer to remind you that you're cooking.

### **7.3 Keeping Things That Can Catch Fire Away from Heat Sources**

7.3.1 Keep anything that can catch fire — oven mitts, wooden utensils, food packaging, towels, or curtains — away from your stovetop.

7.3.2 Keep the stovetop, burners, and oven clean.

7.3.3 Wear short, close-fitting or tightly rolled sleeves when cooking. Loose clothing can dangle onto stove burners and can catch fire if it comes in contact with a gas flame or an electric burner.

### **7.4 What to Do If You Have a Cooking Fire**

7.4.1 Always keep a lid nearby when you're cooking. If a small grease fire starts in a pan, smother the flames by carefully sliding the lid over the pan. Turn off the burner. Do not move the pan. To keep the fire from restarting, leave the lid on until the pan is completely cool.

7.4.1.1 Never pour water on a cooking pan grease fire.

7.4.1.2 Never discharge a portable fire extinguisher directly into a cooking pan grease fire because it will spread the fire.

7.4.2 In case of an oven fire, turn off the heat and keep the door closed until it is cool. After a fire, the oven should be checked and/or serviced before being used again.

7.4.3 When in doubt, just get out! When you leave, close the door behind you to help contain the fire. After you leave, call 9-1-1 or the fire department from a cell phone or a neighbor's telephone.

7.4.4 If you know how to use a portable fire extinguisher and decide to fight the fire, be sure others are already getting out and that you have a clear path to the way out. Call 9-1-1 or the fire department from outside the home.

### **7.5 Keeping Children and Pets Away from the Cooking Area**

7.5.1 Have a "kid-free zone" of at least 3 feet (1 meter) around the stove and areas where hot food or drink is prepared or carried.

7.5.2 Never hold a child while you are cooking, drinking a hot liquid, or carrying hot foods or liquids.



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7.5.3 Keep pets off cooking surfaces and nearby countertops to prevent them from knocking things onto the burner.

### **7.6 Safe Cooking Equipment**

7.6.1 Always use cooking equipment that has the label of a recognized testing laboratory.

7.6.2 Follow the manufacturer's instructions and code requirements when installing cooking equipment. Follow the manufacturer's instructions when cleaning and operating cooking equipment.

7.6.3 Plug microwave ovens or other cooking appliances directly into a wall outlet. Never use an extension cord for a cooking appliance—it can overload the circuit and cause a fire.

7.6.4 Check electrical cords for cracks, breaks, damage, or overheating. Have a professional repair the appliance or cord as needed, or replace the appliance.

### **7.7 Microwave Ovens**

7.7.1 Place or install the microwave oven at a safe height within easy reach of all users. If possible, the face of the person using the microwave oven should be higher than the front of the microwave oven door to reduce the risk of a scald.

7.7.2 Always supervise children when they are using the microwave oven.

7.7.3 Use only microwave-safe cookware (containers or dishes). Never use aluminum foil or metal objects in a microwave oven.

7.7.4 Open microwaved food slowly, away from the face. Hot steam escaping from a container of microwaved food or the food itself can cause burns.

7.7.5 Never heat a baby bottle in a microwave oven because it heats liquids unevenly. Heat baby bottles in warm water from the faucet.

7.7.6 If your microwave is mounted over your stove, use extra caution.

## **Home Fire Sprinklers**

### **2.1 General Tips**

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2.1.1 Sprinklers protect lives and property by keeping fires small. Because the sprinkler system reacts so quickly, it can dramatically reduce the heat, flames, and smoke produced in a fire, allowing people more time to escape safely.

2.1.2 Sprinklers activate individually. Only the sprinkler closest to the fire will activate, spraying water directly on the fire and not the rest of the home.

2.1.3 A sprinkler will control or put out a fire with a tiny fraction of the water that would be used by fire department hoses.

2.1.4 Accidental sprinkler discharges are extremely rare.

2.1.5 Home fire sprinklers can be installed in new or existing homes. If you are remodeling or building your home, install a home fire sprinkler system.

2.1.6 It is especially important to install a home fire sprinkler system in homes with persons who may not be able to get out without help, such as people with disabilities, young children, or older adults.

### 2.2 Installation

2.2.1 Have a qualified contractor install your home fire sprinkler system according to NFPA codes and standards and local fire safety regulations.

2.2.2 Home fire sprinklers work along with smoke alarms to save lives. NFPA data shows that home fire sprinklers reduce the risk of dying in a home fire by 80%.

### 2.3 Maintenance

2.3.1 The fire sprinkler installer must provide instructions on inspecting, testing, and maintaining the system, a simple process that can be performed by the home occupant. A simple visual inspection should be done monthly to ensure that the water valve on the sprinkler is open.

2.3.2 Periodic visual inspection of all sprinklers should be done monthly to make sure nothing is blocking them and nothing is hung or attached to them.

2.3.3 Do a water flow test on the sprinkler system every six months or have a fire sprinkler contractor do the test to ensure all water flow devices are working.

2.3.4 Keep sprinklers clear and free of objects that can interfere with their proper use.

2.3.5 Inspect tanks, if present, monthly to make sure they are full.

2.3.6 Where a pump is used, start it every month to make sure that it works and that it does not trip any circuit breakers.

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2.3.7 Whenever painting, make sure sprinklers are not painted by covering them with a bag, which should be removed immediately after the work is done.

#### Halloween Safety

Special emphasis on Halloween safety includes safety with candles, decorations, and costumes. It is also important to stress fire safety in regard to haunted houses that may be operating in your area. Visit the Codes Enforcement section of the State Fire Marshal's website to learn more about the safety requirements for haunted houses operating in Tennessee (<http://commerce.tn.gov/sfm/fpcesect.shtml>).

- When choosing a costume, stay away from billowing or long, trailing fabric. If you are making your own costume, choose material that won't easily ignite if it comes into contact with heat or flame. If your children wear masks, make sure eye holes are large enough to allow unobstructed views.
- Dried flowers, cornstalks and crepe paper are highly flammable. Keep these and other decorations well away from all open flames and heat sources, including light bulbs and heaters.
- It is safest to use a flashlight or battery-operated candles in a jack-o-lantern. If you use a flame candle, use extreme caution and keep them well attended at all times. When lighting candles inside jack-o-lanterns, use long fireplace matches or a long-nozzled candle lighter. Be sure to place lit pumpkins well away from anything that can burn and far enough out of the way of trick-or-treaters and such high-traffic areas as doorsteps, walkways and yards.
- Remember to keep exits clear of decorations, so nothing blocks escape routes.
- Tell children to stay away from open flames. Be sure they know how to stop, drop and roll if their clothing catches fire. (Have them practice stopping immediately, dropping to the ground, covering their faces with their hands, and rolling over and over.)
- Use flashlights or other battery-operated lights as alternatives to candles or torch lights when decorating walkways and yards. They are much safer for trick-or-treaters, whose costumes may brush against the lighting.
- When attending a Halloween party, look for ways out of the home/venue and plan how you would get out in an emergency.
- If you have a Halloween party, check for cigarettes under furniture cushions and in areas where people might have smoked, before you go to bed.

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## **NOVEMBER 2014**

### **EVENTS:**

- **Time Change – “Change Your Clock, Change Your Batteries”**
- **Thanksgiving Holiday**

### **THEMES:**

**SFMO Annual Theme: “It’s Fire Safety Time in Tennessee”**

**SFMO Monthly Theme: “A Fire-safe Thanksgiving”**

### **November 2014 Topics**

Week 1 – Carbon Monoxide Hazards

Week 2 – Electrical Hazards

Week 3 – Cooking Safety – Turkey Fryers

Week 4 – Home Heating

### **Holiday Travel Safety**

Promote fire safety during holiday travel at Thanksgiving and the need for having an “escape plan” while staying in hotels, motels, and with family members. Also remind family members to have working smoke alarms and check smoke alarms on a regular basis. Thanksgiving is November 27<sup>th</sup>, so remember fire safety while visiting friends and relatives and have a fire safe weekend.

### **Change Your Clock, Change Your Batteries**

Time will fall back to standard time again on Sunday, November 2, 2014, when daylight saving time ends. As folks are changing their clocks, remind them to change the batteries in their smoke alarms as well!

### **Prepare Local Vendors**

In 2008, a store clerk was trampled to death as shoppers rushed through a retailer’s doors to take advantage of a “Black Friday” sale. Encourage retailers and store owners to take precautions to prevent worker injuries during sales events or at other events where large crowds may gather. Utilize the “Crowd Management Safety Guidelines for

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Retailers” provided by the Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA) found here: [https://www.osha.gov/OshDoc/data\\_General\\_Facts/Crowd\\_Control.html](https://www.osha.gov/OshDoc/data_General_Facts/Crowd_Control.html)

Christmas tree vendors will start setting up this month. Ask the vendors in your community to include tags on their trees with fire safety tips. Your department can order a limited amount of these for free from the USFA ([www.usfa.fema.gov](http://www.usfa.fema.gov)) or print your own from NFPA ([www.nfpa.org](http://www.nfpa.org)).

### **National Fire Service History**

- November 9, 1872 - Great Boston Fire (9 FF's Killed)
- November 15, 1942 - Boston Wall Collapse (6 FF's Killed)
- November 28, 1942 - Coconut Grove Nightclub Fire (492 deaths) Boston
- November 21, 1980 - MGM Grand Hotel Fire (85 deaths)
- November 29, 1988 - Kansas City Trailer Explosion (6 FF's Killed)

### **Tennessee Specific History**

- November 22, 1900 - Columbia Tornado Kills 25 people
- November 17, 1908 - Lookout Mt Inn Burned
- November 3, 2001 - Chattanooga Complex Fire Disaster
- November 14, 2001 - TN Ridge Crest Fire Disaster, Pigeon Forge

## **NFPA PUBLIC EDUCATION RESOURCES**

### **Carbon Monoxide**

#### **3.1 Dangers of Carbon Monoxide**

3.1.1 Carbon monoxide (CO), often called “the silent killer,” is a gas you cannot see, taste, or smell. It can be created when fossil fuels, such as kerosene, gasoline, coal, natural gas, propane, methane, or wood do not burn properly. CO gas can be deadly.

3.1.2 Carbon monoxide poisoning can result from faulty furnaces or other heating appliances, portable generators, water heaters, clothes dryers, or cars left running in garages.

3.1.3 Symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning may include headache, nausea, and drowsiness.

3.1.4 Exposure to undetected high levels of carbon monoxide can be fatal.

#### **3.2 Installation**

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3.2.1 Choose a CO alarm that has the label of a recognized testing laboratory. Install and maintain CO alarms inside your home to provide early warning of carbon monoxide.

3.2.2 CO alarms should be installed in a central location outside each separate sleeping area, on every level of the home, and in other locations where required by applicable laws, codes, or standards. For the best protection, have CO alarms that are interconnected throughout the home. When one sounds, they all sound.

3.2.3 Follow the manufacturer's instructions for placement and mounting height.

3.2.4 Combination smoke-CO alarms must be installed in accordance with requirements for smoke alarms.

3.2.5 CO alarms are not substitutes for smoke alarms and vice versa. Know the difference between the sound of smoke alarms and the sound of CO alarms.

### **3.3 Testing and Replacement**

3.3.1 Test CO alarms at least once a month and replace CO alarms if they fail to respond correctly when tested. The sensors in CO alarms have a limited life. Replace the CO alarm according to manufacturer's instructions, or when the end-of-life signal sounds.

3.3.2 Know the difference between the sound of the CO alarm and the smoke alarm, and their low-battery signals. If the audible low-battery signal sounds, replace the batteries or replace the device. If the CO alarm still sounds, get to a fresh air location and call 9-1-1 or the fire department.

3.3.3 To keep CO alarms working well, follow manufacturer's instructions for cleaning. The instructions are included in the package or can be found on the internet.

### **3.4 Carbon Monoxide Precautions – Inside the Home**

3.4.1 Have fuel-burning heating equipment (fireplaces, furnaces, water heaters, wood stoves, coal stoves, space heaters, and portable heaters) and chimneys inspected by a professional every year.

3.4.2 Open the damper for proper ventilation before using a fireplace.

3.4.3 Never use your oven or stovetop to heat your home. The carbon monoxide (CO) gas might kill people and pets.

3.4.4 When purchasing new heating and cooking equipment, select products tested and labeled by a recognized testing laboratory.

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3.4.5 Make sure all fuel-burning vented equipment is vented to the outside to avoid carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning. Keep the venting for exhaust clear and unblocked.

### 3.5 Carbon Monoxide Precautions — Outside the Home

3.5.1 If you need to warm a vehicle, remove it from the garage immediately after starting it. Never run a vehicle or other fueled engine or motor indoors, even if garage doors are open. Make sure the exhaust pipe of a running vehicle is not blocked with snow, ice, or other materials. The carbon monoxide (CO) gas might kill people and pets.

3.5.2 Make sure vents for the dryer, furnace, stove, and fireplace are clear of snow and other debris.

3.5.3 Only use barbecue grills outside, away from all doors, windows, vents and other building openings. Some can produce carbon monoxide gas (CO). Never use them inside the home or the garage, even if the doors are open.

### 3.6 Portable Generators

3.6.1 Use portable generators outdoors in well-ventilated areas away from all doors, windows, vents and other building openings to prevent exhaust fumes from entering the home.

3.6.2 When using portable generators, install battery-operated CO alarms or plug-in CO alarms with a battery backup in the home according to the manufacturer's installation Instructions.

### 3.7 If Your CO Alarm Sounds

3.7.1 Immediately move to a fresh air location (outdoors or by an open window or door). Make sure everyone inside the home is accounted for.

3.7.2 Call 9-1-1 or the fire department from a fresh air location (outdoors or by an open window). Remain at a fresh air location until emergency personnel arrive to assist you.

## **Electrical**

### 11.1 Inside the Home

11.1.1 Electrical work should be done only by a qualified electrician. Some communities require that a person doing electrical work have a license. Find out about the laws in your area.

11.1.2 Have your home electrical system inspected by a qualified professional when buying, selling, or renovating a home.

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11.1.3 Keep lamps, light fixtures, and light bulbs away from anything that can burn, including furniture, bedding, curtains, clothing, and flammable or combustible gases and liquids.

11.1.4 Use light bulbs that match the recommended wattage on the lamp or fixture.

11.1.5 If a fuse blows or a circuit breaker trips often, find out why and get the problem corrected before turning the breaker back on or replacing the fuse. Have a qualified electrician inspect and fix it.

11.1.6 Always replace blown fuses with ones of the proper rating. If the problem continues, call an electrician.

11.1.7 Major appliances (refrigerators, stoves, washers, dryers, etc.) should be plugged directly into a wall outlet. Never use an extension cord with a major appliance—it can be easily overloaded.

11.1.7.1 Small appliances should be plugged directly into a wall outlet. Unplug small appliances when not in use.

11.1.8 Window air conditioners should be plugged directly into a wall outlet. Many manufacturers of room air conditioners prohibit the use of extension cords. If the manufacturer's instructions allow extension cords, follow the instructions for the proper type.

11.1.9 Buy only appliances that have the label of a recognized testing laboratory.

11.1.10 Check electrical cords often. Replace cracked, damaged, and loose electrical or extension cords. Do not try to repair them.

11.1.11 Avoid putting cords where they can be damaged or pinched by furniture, under rugs and carpets, or across doorways.

11.1.12 Use only surge protectors or power strips that have internal overload protection. Use surge protectors or power strips that have the label of a recognized testing laboratory.

11.1.13 Extension cords are for temporary use only. Have a qualified electrician determine if additional circuits or wall outlets are needed.

11.1.14 Replace wall outlets if plugs do not fit snugly or the wall outlet does not accept plugs with one blade larger than the other.

11.1.15 All wall outlets and switches should be covered with wall plates to prevent shocks.



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11.1.16 Install tamper-resistant electrical outlets if you have young children. Where replacement is not possible, install new protective outlet covers, which do not allow a child to insert an object into the wall outlet.

11.1.17 Call a qualified electrician if you have any of the following:

- (A) recurring problems with blowing fuses or tripping circuit breakers
- (B) a tingling feeling when you touch an electrical appliance
- (C) discolored or warm wall outlets or switches
- (D) a burning smell or rubbery odor coming from an appliance
- (E) flickering lights
- (F) sparks from a wall outlet
- (G) cracked or broken wall outlets

11.1.18 Arc fault circuit interrupters (AFCIs) shut off electricity when a dangerous condition occurs. Have a qualified electrician install AFCIs in your home.

11.1.19 Ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) reduce the risk of shock. GFCIs shut off electricity when it becomes a shock hazard. Make sure GFCIs are installed in bathrooms, basements, garages, outdoors, at kitchen counters and in other locations in the home where electricity is near water.

11.1.20 Test AFCIs and GFCIs once a month by pushing the test button to make sure they are working properly.

#### **Clothes Dryers**

18.1.1 Have your dryer installed and serviced by a professional.

18.1.2 Do not use the dryer without a lint filter.

18.1.3 Clean out the dryer's lint filter before and after each load of laundry. Remove the lint that has collected around the drum.

18.1.4 Clean lint out of the vent pipe quarterly or more often if you notice that it is taking longer than usual for your clothes to dry, or have a dryer lint removal service do it for you.

18.1.5 Rigid or flexible metal venting material should be used to sustain proper air flow and drying time to reduce the risk of fire or fire spread.

18.1.6 Make sure the air exhaust vent pipe is not restricted and the outdoor vent flap will open when the dryer is operating.

18.1.7 Make sure the right plug and wall outlet are used and that the machine is connected properly.

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18.1.8 Keep dryers in good working order. Gas dryers should be inspected by a professional to make sure that the gas line and connection are intact and free of leaks.

18.1.9 Follow the manufacturer's operating instructions. Do not overload the dryer.

18.1.10 Turn off the dryer when you leave home or go to bed.

#### 11.2 Outside the Home

11.2.1 Electrical work should be done by a qualified electrician.

11.2.2 Keep ladders at least 10 feet away from overhead power lines. Use wooden or fiberglass ladders outdoors.

11.2.3 Never touch a power line; you could be injured or electrocuted. Assume that all power lines are live. Stay at a safe distance.

11.2.4 Never touch anyone or anything in contact with a downed wire. You could be injured or electrocuted.

11.2.5 Report downed power lines to authorities.

11.2.6 Some power lines are underground. Call your local authority to have lines identified and marked before digging. You can also call the national 8-1-1 "Call before you dig" number.

#### **Thanksgiving Day Fires – History from the US Fire Administration**

On Thanksgiving Day, many families customarily spend the holiday inside their home or the home of a friend or family member with the family dinner being the highlight of the day. Because of this holiday custom, from 2006 to 2008, the average number of reported residential building fires on Thanksgiving Day almost doubled (49 percent) from the average number of fires in residential buildings on all days other than Thanksgiving (26 percent).

- An estimated 2,000 Thanksgiving Day fires in residential buildings are reported to U.S. fire departments each year and cause an estimated average of 5 deaths, 25 injuries, and \$21 million in property loss.
- Thanksgiving Day fires in residential buildings occur most frequently in the afternoon hours from 12 to 4 p.m., peaking from noon to 1 p.m.
- Cooking is the leading cause of all Thanksgiving Day fires in residential buildings at 69 percent. Nearly all of these cooking fires (97 percent) are small, confined fires with limited damage.

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- The leading category of factors contributing to ignition of nonconfined Thanksgiving Day fires in residential buildings is the “misuse of material or product” (35 percent). Within this category, heat source too close to combustible materials and abandoned or discarded materials account for 14 percent and 9 percent of all nonconfined Thanksgiving Day fires in residential buildings, respectively.
- No smoke alarms were present in 20 percent of nonconfined Thanksgiving Day fires in occupied residential buildings

### **Cooking – General Info**

#### **7.1 Stay Alert**

7.1.1 To prevent cooking fires, you must be alert. You won't be alert if you are sleepy, have consumed alcohol, or have taken medicine or drugs that make you drowsy.

#### **7.2 Watch What You Heat!**

7.2.1 The leading cause of fires in the kitchen is unattended cooking.

7.2.2 Stay in the kitchen when you are frying, grilling, or broiling food. If you leave the kitchen for even a short period of time, turn off the stove.

7.2.3 If you are simmering, baking, roasting, or boiling food, check it regularly, remain in the home while food is cooking, and use a timer to remind you that you're cooking.

#### **7.3 Keeping Things That Can Catch Fire Away from Heat Sources**

7.3.1 Keep anything that can catch fire — oven mitts, wooden utensils, food packaging, towels, or curtains — away from your stovetop.

7.3.2 Keep the stovetop, burners, and oven clean.

7.3.3 Wear short, close-fitting or tightly rolled sleeves when cooking. Loose clothing can dangle onto stove burners and can catch fire if it comes in contact with a gas flame or an electric burner.

#### **7.4 What to Do If You Have a Cooking Fire**

7.4.1 Always keep a lid nearby when you're cooking. If a small grease fire starts in a pan, smother the flames by carefully sliding the lid over the pan. Turn off the burner. Do not move the pan. To keep the fire from restarting, leave the lid on until the pan is completely cool.

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7.4.1.1 Never pour water on a cooking pan grease fire.

7.4.1.2 Never discharge a portable fire extinguisher directly into a cooking pan grease fire because it will spread the fire.

7.4.2 In case of an oven fire, turn off the heat and keep the door closed until it is cool. After a fire, the oven should be checked and/or serviced before being used again.

7.4.3 When in doubt, just get out! When you leave, close the door behind you to help contain the fire. After you leave, call 9-1-1 or the fire department from a cell phone or a neighbor's telephone.

7.4.4 If you know how to use a portable fire extinguisher and decide to fight the fire, be sure others are already getting out and that you have a clear path to the way out. Call 9-1-1 or the fire department from outside the home.

### **7.5 Keeping Children and Pets Away from the Cooking Area**

7.5.1 Have a "kid-free zone" of at least 3 feet (1 meter) around the stove and areas where hot food or drink is prepared or carried.

7.5.2 Never hold a child while you are cooking, drinking a hot liquid, or carrying hot foods or liquids.

7.5.3 Keep pets off cooking surfaces and nearby countertops to prevent them from knocking things onto the burner.

### **7.6 Safe Cooking Equipment**

7.6.1 Always use cooking equipment that has the label of a recognized testing laboratory.

7.6.2 Follow the manufacturer's instructions and code requirements when installing cooking equipment. Follow the manufacturer's instructions when cleaning and operating cooking equipment.

7.6.3 Plug microwave ovens or other cooking appliances directly into a wall outlet. Never use an extension cord for a cooking appliance—it can overload the circuit and cause a fire.

7.6.4 Check electrical cords for cracks, breaks, damage, or overheating. Have a professional repair the appliance or cord as needed, or replace the appliance.

### **7.7 Microwave Ovens**

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7.7.1 Place or install the microwave oven at a safe height within easy reach of all users. If possible, the face of the person using the microwave oven should be higher than the front of the microwave oven door to reduce the risk of a scald.

7.7.2 Always supervise children when they are using the microwave oven.

7.7.3 Use only microwave-safe cookware (containers or dishes). Never use aluminum foil or metal objects in a microwave oven.

7.7.4 Open microwaved food slowly, away from the face. Hot steam escaping from a container of microwaved food or the food itself can cause burns.

7.7.5 Never heat a baby bottle in a microwave oven because it heats liquids unevenly. Heat baby bottles in warm water from the faucet.

7.7.6 If your microwave is mounted over your stove, use extra caution.

#### 7.11 Turkey Fryers

7.11.1 The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) discourages the use of outdoor gas-fueled turkey fryers that immerse the turkey in hot oil. These turkey fryers use a substantial quantity of cooking oil at high temperatures, and units currently available for home use pose a significant danger that hot oil will be released at some point during the cooking process. The use of turkey fryers by consumers can lead to devastating burns or other injuries and the destruction of property.

### **Home Heating Safety**

#### 9.1 General Heating

9.1.1 Have a 3-foot (1 meter) "kid-free zone" around open fires and space heaters.

9.1.2 Supervise children whenever a wood or oil stove or other space heater is being used. Use a sturdy metal screen to prevent contact burns, which are more common than flame burns.

9.1.3 All heaters need space. Keep anything that can burn at least 3 feet (1 meter) away from heating equipment.

9.1.4 Use heating equipment that has the label of a recognized testing laboratory.

9.1.5 Never use your oven or stove for heating. Ovens and stoves are not designed to heat your home.

9.1.6 Install stationary space heating equipment, water heaters, or central heating equipment according to the local codes and manufacturer's instructions.

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9.1.7 Have a qualified professional install the equipment.

9.1.8 Make sure all fuel-burning vented equipment is vented to the outside to avoid carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning. Carbon monoxide is created when fuels burn incompletely. Carbon monoxide poisoning can cause illness and even death. Make sure the venting for exhaust is kept clear and unobstructed. This includes removal of snow and ice and other debris around the outlet to the outside.

9.1.9 Choose a CO alarm that has the label of a recognized testing laboratory. Install and maintain CO alarms inside your home to provide early warning of carbon monoxide.

9.1.10 Maintain heating equipment and chimneys by having them cleaned and inspected annually by a qualified professional.

### **9.2 Portable Electric Space Heaters**

9.2.1 Turn heaters off when you go to bed or leave the room.

9.2.2 Purchase and use only portable space heaters that have the label of a recognized testing laboratory and that have an automatic shut-off—if they tip over, they shut off.

9.2.3 Place space heaters on a solid, flat surface and keep them and their electrical cords away from things that can burn, high traffic areas, and doorways.

9.2.4 Plug space heaters directly into wall outlets and never into an extension cord or power strip.

9.2.4.1 Do not plug anything else into the same circuit as the one you are using for your space heater. Doing so could result in overheating.

9.2.4.2 Check often for a secure plug/outlet fit. If the plug does not fit snugly into the wall outlet or if the plug becomes very hot, the outlet may need to be replaced. Have a qualified electrician replace the outlet.

9.2.5 Inspect for cracked or damaged cords, broken plugs, or loose connections. Replace before using the space heater.

### **9.3 Fuel Burning Space Heaters**

9.3.1 Always use the proper fuel as specified by the manufacturer.

9.3.2 When refueling, allow the appliance to cool first and then refuel outside.

9.3.3 When using the space heater, open a window to ensure proper ventilation.

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9.3.4 In portable kerosene or other liquid-fueled space heaters, always use the proper grade of fuel the unit is designed to use.

9.3.5 All new unvented gas-fired space heaters have an oxygen depletion sensor that detects a reduced level of oxygen in the area where the heater is operating and shuts off the heater before a hazardous level of carbon monoxide accumulates. If you have an older heater without this feature, replace it with one that does.

9.3.6 If the pilot light of your gas heater goes out, allow 5 minutes or more for the gas to go away before trying to relight the pilot. Follow manufacturer's instructions when relighting the pilot. Do not allow gas to accumulate, and light the match before you turn on the gas to the pilot to avoid risk of flashback.

9.3.7 If you smell gas in your gas heater, do not light the appliance. Leave the building immediately and call 9-1-1, the fire department, or the gas company.

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## **DECEMBER 2014**

### **EVENTS:**

- **SFMO Poster Contest Judging**
- **Christmas Holiday**

### **THEMES:**

**SFMO Annual Theme: "It's Fire Safety Time in Tennessee"**

**SFMO Monthly Theme: "Holiday Fire Safety"**

### **December 2014 Topics**

Week 1 – Christmas Tree Safety

Week 2 – Candles and Holiday Décor Hazards

Week 3 – Holiday Cooking Safety

Week 4 – New Year's Celebration Safety: Places of Public Assembly/Fireworks

### **State Fire Marshal's Office Annual Poster Contest Judging**

The local community school children have been creating posters based on the national fire prevention theme of the year. The posters have been judged on a local level and the winners from each participating community will now be turned into the State for judging. The State contest will be held in December. All state winners and their families will get to attend the State Awards banquet held in 2015.

### **Holiday Fire Safety**

Each year fires occurring during the holiday season claim the lives of over 400 people, injure 1,650 more, and cause over \$990 million in damage according to the USFA. By following some of the outlined precautionary tips, individuals can greatly reduce their chances of becoming a holiday fire casualty. Remember to promote fire safety during holiday travel at Christmas and the need for having an "escape plan" while at holiday parties, or staying in hotels and/or with family members. Remind family members to have working smoke alarms and check smoke alarms on a regular basis.



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### **National Fire Service History**

- December 5, 1876 - NY Theater Fire (300 deaths)
- December 30, 1903 - Iroquois Theatre Fire (602 deaths)
- December 22, 1910 - Chicago Stockyard Fire (21 FF's killed)
- December 22, 1910 - PA Leather Factory Fire (13 FF's killed)
- December 7, 1946 - Atlanta Winecoff Hotel Disaster (119 deaths)
- December 1, 1958 - Our Lady of Angels School Fire (95 deaths)
- December 29, 1963 - Roosevelt Hotel Fire (21 guests and 1 FF's killed)
- December 3, 1999 - Cold Storage Warehouse Fire (6 FF's killed)

### **Tennessee Specific History**

- December 9, 1911 - Briceville Coal Mine Explosion
- December 12, 1960 - Major Fire in Dayton, TN
- December 25, 1961 - Maxwell House Hotel Fire
- December 22, 2008 - TVA Kingston Ash Spill

## **NFPA PUBLIC EDUCATION RESOURCES**

### **Christmas Tree Fire Safety**

Each year, fire departments respond to an average of 210 structure fires caused by Christmas trees. A heat source too close to the Christmas tree started one of every five (18%) of these fires. Christmas tree fires are not common, but when they occur, they are likely to be serious. On average, one of every 66 reported fires that began with a Christmas tree resulted in death. Carefully decorating Christmas trees can help make your holidays safer.

#### Picking the tree

- If you have an artificial tree, be sure it is labeled, certified, or identified by the manufacturer as fire retardant.
- Choose a tree with fresh, green needles that do not fall off when touched. The trunk should be sticky to the touch. Old trees can be identified by bouncing the tree trunk on the ground. If many needles fall off, the tree has been cut too long, has probably dried out, and is a fire hazard.

#### Placing the tree

- Before placing the tree in the stand, cut 1" - 2" from the base of the trunk.
- Make sure the tree is at least three feet away from any heat source, like fireplaces, radiators, candles, heat vents or lights. The heat will dry out the tree, causing it to be more easily ignited by heat, flame or sparks. Be careful not to drop or flick cigarette ashes near a tree. Do not put your live tree up too early or leave it up for longer than two weeks.
- Make sure the tree is not blocking an exit.

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- Add water to the tree stand. Be sure to add water daily.

### Lighting the tree

- Use lights that have the label of an independent testing laboratory. Some lights are only for indoor or outdoor use, but not both.
- Replace any string of lights with worn or broken cords or loose bulb connections. Connect no more than three strands of mini string sets and a maximum of 50 bulbs for screw-in bulbs. Read manufacturer's instructions for number of LED strands to connect.
- Never use lit candles to decorate the tree.
- Always turn off Christmas tree lights before leaving home or going to bed.

### Disposing of the tree

- Get rid of the tree when it begins dropping needles. Dried-out trees are a fire danger and should not be left in the home or garage, or placed outside against the home.
- Never put tree branches or needles in a fireplace or wood burning stove.
- The best way to dispose of your tree is by taking it to a recycling center or having it hauled away by a community pick-up service. Check with your local community to find a recycling program.

## **Candle & Holiday Décor Hazards**

Nothing spreads cheer quite like holiday decorations, but care must be used to ensure your festive winter décor is fire-safe. Consider the tips below when you bring out the holiday decorations this year. And remember, as in every season, have working smoke alarms installed on every level of your home, test them monthly and keep them clean and equipped with fresh batteries at all times. Don't forget to practice your home escape plan!

- *Maintain Your Holiday Lights.* Inspect holiday lights each year for frayed wires, bare spots, gaps in the insulation, broken or cracked sockets, and excessive kinking or wear before putting them up. Use only lighting listed by an approved testing laboratory. Use clips, not nails, to hang lights to keep cords from getting damaged.
- *Do Not Overload Electrical Outlets.* Do not link more than three light strands, unless the directions indicate it is safe. Connect strings of lights to an extension cord before plugging the cord into the outlet. Make sure to periodically check the wires - they should not be warm to the touch.
- *Do Not Leave Holiday Lights on Unattended.* Turn them off when you leave the house or go to bed.

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- *Use Only Nonflammable Decorations.* All decorations should be flame resistant or flame retardant and placed away from heat vents.
- *Never Put Wrapping Paper in a Fireplace.* It can result in a very large fire, throwing off dangerous sparks and embers and may result in a chimney fire.
- *Artificial Christmas Trees.* If you are using a metallic or artificial tree make sure it is flame retardant.
- *Avoid Using Lit Candles to Decorate.* If you do use them, make sure they are in stable holders and place them where they cannot be easily knocked down. Never put lit candles on a tree. Never leave the house with candles burning.

#### 13.1 General Candle Safety

13.1.1 Consider using battery-operated flameless candles, which can look, smell, and feel like real candles.

13.1.2 When using candles, place them in sturdy, safe candleholders that won't burn.

13.1.3 Protect candle flames with glass chimneys or containers.

13.1.4 Keep candles at least 12 inches (30 centimeters) from anything that can burn.

13.1.5 Never leave a burning candle unattended. Burning candles can start a fire.

13.1.6 Avoid using candles in bedrooms and sleeping areas. Extinguish candles when you leave a room or the home, or go to bed. Keep children and pets away from burning candles.

13.1.7 Be careful not to splatter wax when extinguishing a candle.

13.1.8 Never use a candle where medical oxygen is being used. The two can combine to create a large, unexpected fire. Medical oxygen can cause materials to ignite more easily and burn at a faster rate than normal. It can make an existing fire burn faster and hotter.

13.1.9 Always use a flashlight—not a candle—for emergency lighting.

13.1.10 Use only battery-powered lights in tents, trailers, motor homes, and boats.

#### 13.2 Candle Use in Home Worship

13.2.1 Lit candles are used in some religious rites and ceremonies in the home. Candles should be used with care.

13.2.2 Lit candles should not be placed in windows, where blinds and curtains can close over them, causing a fire.

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13.2.3 Handheld candles should not be passed from one person to another at any time.

13.2.4 To lower the risk of fire, candles should be used by only a few designated adults.

13.2.5 Candles placed on or near tables, altars, or shrines must be maintained under the supervision of an adult.

13.2.6 Candles should be placed in sturdy, non-combustible candle holders that do not allow dripping wax to escape through the bottom of the holder.

13.2.7 If a sturdy, non-combustible candle holder is not available, the candle can be placed on a non-combustible plate.

13.2.8 A handheld candle should be put out before the person holding it moves from the place of initial lighting. Once it is put out, the candle should be placed in an approved, non-combustible container.

13.2.9 The best way to avoid getting burned from splashed wax is to use a candle snuffer instead of blowing on the flame.

### **Cooking – General Info**

#### **7.1 Stay Alert**

7.1.1 To prevent cooking fires, you must be alert. You won't be alert if you are sleepy, have consumed alcohol, or have taken medicine or drugs that make you drowsy.

#### **7.2 Watch What You Heat!**

7.2.1 The leading cause of fires in the kitchen is unattended cooking.

7.2.2 Stay in the kitchen when you are frying, grilling, or broiling food. If you leave the kitchen for even a short period of time, turn off the stove.

7.2.3 If you are simmering, baking, roasting, or boiling food, check it regularly, remain in the home while food is cooking, and use a timer to remind you that you're cooking.

#### **7.3 Keeping Things That Can Catch Fire Away from Heat Sources**

7.3.1 Keep anything that can catch fire — oven mitts, wooden utensils, food packaging, towels, or curtains — away from your stovetop.

7.3.2 Keep the stovetop, burners, and oven clean.

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7.3.3 Wear short, close-fitting or tightly rolled sleeves when cooking. Loose clothing can dangle onto stove burners and can catch fire if it comes in contact with a gas flame or an electric burner.

### **7.4 What to Do If You Have a Cooking Fire**

7.4.1 Always keep a lid nearby when you're cooking. If a small grease fire starts in a pan, smother the flames by carefully sliding the lid over the pan. Turn off the burner. Do not move the pan. To keep the fire from restarting, leave the lid on until the pan is completely cool.

7.4.1.1 Never pour water on a cooking pan grease fire.

7.4.1.2 Never discharge a portable fire extinguisher directly into a cooking pan grease fire because it will spread the fire.

7.4.2 In case of an oven fire, turn off the heat and keep the door closed until it is cool. After a fire, the oven should be checked and/or serviced before being used again.

7.4.3 When in doubt, just get out! When you leave, close the door behind you to help contain the fire. After you leave, call 9-1-1 or the fire department from a cell phone or a neighbor's telephone.

7.4.4 If you know how to use a portable fire extinguisher and decide to fight the fire, be sure others are already getting out and that you have a clear path to the way out. Call 9-1-1 or the fire department from outside the home.

### **7.5 Keeping Children and Pets Away from the Cooking Area**

7.5.1 Have a "kid-free zone" of at least 3 feet (1 meter) around the stove and areas where hot food or drink is prepared or carried.

7.5.2 Never hold a child while you are cooking, drinking a hot liquid, or carrying hot foods or liquids.

7.5.3 Keep pets off cooking surfaces and nearby countertops to prevent them from knocking things onto the burner.

### **7.6 Safe Cooking Equipment**

7.6.1 Always use cooking equipment that has the label of a recognized testing laboratory.

7.6.2 Follow the manufacturer's instructions and code requirements when installing cooking equipment. Follow the manufacturer's instructions when cleaning and operating cooking equipment.

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7.6.3 Plug microwave ovens or other cooking appliances directly into a wall outlet. Never use an extension cord for a cooking appliance—it can overload the circuit and cause a fire.

7.6.4 Check electrical cords for cracks, breaks, damage, or overheating. Have a professional repair the appliance or cord as needed, or replace the appliance.

#### 7.7 Microwave Ovens

7.7.1 Place or install the microwave oven at a safe height within easy reach of all users. If possible, the face of the person using the microwave oven should be higher than the front of the microwave oven door to reduce the risk of a scald.

7.7.2 Always supervise children when they are using the microwave oven.

7.7.3 Use only microwave-safe cookware (containers or dishes). Never use aluminum foil or metal objects in a microwave oven.

7.7.4 Open microwaved food slowly, away from the face. Hot steam escaping from a container of microwaved food or the food itself can cause burns.

7.7.5 Never heat a baby bottle in a microwave oven because it heats liquids unevenly. Heat baby bottles in warm water from the faucet.

7.7.6 If your microwave is mounted over your stove, use extra caution.

#### 7.11 Turkey Fryers

7.11.1 The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) discourages the use of outdoor gas-fueled turkey fryers that immerse the turkey in hot oil. These turkey fryers use a substantial quantity of cooking oil at high temperatures, and units currently available for home use pose a significant danger that hot oil will be released at some point during the cooking process. The use of turkey fryers by consumers can lead to devastating burns or other injuries and the destruction of property.

### **New Year's Celebration Safety: Places of Public Assembly/Fireworks**

Every day, millions of people wake up, go to work or school, and take part in social events. But every so often the unexpected happens: an earthquake, a fire, a chemical spill, an act of terrorism or some other disaster. Routines change drastically, and people are suddenly aware of how fragile their lives and routines can be. Each disaster can have lasting effects — people may be seriously injured or killed, and devastating and costly property damage can occur. People entering any public assembly building need to be prepared in case of an emergency.

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### Before you enter

- *Take a good look.* Does the building appear to be in a condition that makes you feel comfortable? Is the main entrance wide and does it open outward to allow easy exit? Is the outside area clear of materials stored against the building or blocking exits?
- *Have a communication plan.* Identify a relative or friend to contact in case of emergency and you are separated from family or friends.
- *Plan a meeting place.* Pick a meeting place outside to meet family or friends with whom you are attending the function. If there is an emergency, be sure to meet them there.

### When you enter

- *Locate exits immediately.* When you enter a building you should look for all available exits. Some exits may be in front and some in back of you. Be prepared to use your closest exit. You may not be able to use the main exit.
- *Check for clear exit paths.* Make sure aisles are wide enough and not obstructed by chairs or furniture. Check to make sure your exit door is not blocked or chained. If there are not at least two exits or exit paths are blocked, report the violation to management and leave the building if it is not immediately addressed. Call the local fire marshal to register a complaint.
- *Do you feel safe?* Does the building appear to be overcrowded? Are there fire sources such as candles burning, cigarettes or cigars burning, pyrotechnics, or other heat sources that may make you feel unsafe? Are there safety systems in place such as alternative exits, sprinklers, and smoke alarms? Ask the management for clarification on your concerns. If you do not feel safe in the building, leave immediately.

### During an emergency

- *React immediately.* If an alarm sounds, you see smoke or fire, or other unusual disturbance immediately exit the building in an orderly fashion.
- *Get out, stay out!* Once you have escaped, stay out. Under no circumstances should you ever go back into a burning building. Let trained firefighters conduct rescue operations.

### Fireworks

Celebrating a new year with consumer fireworks has been a longstanding tradition in the United States. However, thousands of people, most often children and teens, are seriously injured each year through their use.

The State Fire Marshal's Office strongly advises to maximize fire safety by opting to attend organized fireworks displays. Tennesseans are encouraged to enjoy the holiday at a public display presented by trained professionals, where compliance with state-of-the-art fire codes offers a safer way to ring in a new year.

If consumer fireworks are legal where you live and you decide to set them off on your own, be sure to follow these important safety tips:

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- Never allow children to handle or ignite fireworks – this includes sparklers.
- Read and follow all warnings and instructions.
- Wear eye protection.
- Be sure other people are out of range before lighting fireworks.
- Never throw or point fireworks at people or animals.
- Only light fireworks outdoors on a smooth, flat surface away from homes, dry leaves and flammable materials.
- Never try to relight fireworks that have not fully functioned.
- Keep a bucket of water and a garden hose nearby in case of a malfunction or fire.

Fire department note: Reporting fireworks incidents properly to the Tennessee Fire Incident Reporting System (TFIRS) is extremely important. The more we know about a problem, the more we can do to prevent it. ***See supplemental information section for guidelines on how to document fireworks incidents in TFIRS.***



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## JANUARY 2015

### EVENTS:

- New Year's Day Holiday
- SFMO Poster Contest & Public Educator of the Year Awards Event

### THEMES:

SFMO Annual Theme: "It's Fire Safety Time in Tennessee"

SFMO Monthly Theme: "Stay Warm, Stay Safe"

### January 2015 Topics

Week 1 – Carbon Monoxide Hazards: Portable Generators

Week 2 – Winter Weather

Week 3 – Heating Hazards: Portable Heaters

Week 4 – Manufactured Home Safety

### New Year's Day Resolutions

Promote "New Year Resolutions" to include fire prevention and safety activities.

### Manufactured Housing Safety

More than 258,000 manufactured homes exist in Tennessee. Promote fire safety in manufactured housing.

### WINTER RESIDENTIAL BUILDING FIRES

- Winter residential building fires result in an estimated average of 945 deaths, 3,825 injuries, and \$1,708,000,000 in property loss each year.
- Fires in one- and two-family dwellings account for 67 percent of all winter residential building fires.
- Cooking is the leading cause of all winter residential building fires.
- Winter residential building fires occur mainly in the early evening hours, peaking from 5 to 8 p.m.
- Although at its highest in December, residential building fire incidence is collectively highest in the 3 winter months of January, February, and March.  
(Source: Winter Residential Building Fires (PDF, 1.0 Mb))

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### **National Fire Service History**

- January 11, 1820 - GA Fire Damages 463 houses
- January 13, 1908 - Rhodes Opera House Fire (170 deaths)
- January 21, 1924 - PA Refinery Explodes (7 FF's Killed)
- January 7, 1950 - Iowa Mercy Hospital Fire (41 deaths)
- January 28, 1961 Wall Collapse (9 FF deaths)

### **Tennessee Specific History**

- January 20, 2004 - Nursing home fire kills 5 in Maryville
- January 26, 2007 - Hwy 58 FF Died in Residential Collapse
- January 29, 2012 - Fire at Cleveland Newly Weds Foods plant resulted in a loss exceeding 8 million dollars.

## **NFPA PUBLIC EDUCATION RESOURCES**

### **Carbon Monoxide**

#### 3.1 Dangers of Carbon Monoxide

3.1.1 Carbon monoxide (CO), often called “the silent killer,” is a gas you cannot see, taste, or smell. It can be created when fossil fuels, such as kerosene, gasoline, coal, natural gas, propane, methane, or wood do not burn properly. CO gas can be deadly.

3.1.2 Carbon monoxide poisoning can result from faulty furnaces or other heating appliances, portable generators, water heaters, clothes dryers, or cars left running in garages.

3.1.3 Symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning may include headache, nausea, and drowsiness.

3.1.4 Exposure to undetected high levels of carbon monoxide can be fatal.

#### 3.2 Installation

3.2.1 Choose a CO alarm that has the label of a recognized testing laboratory. Install and maintain CO alarms inside your home to provide early warning of carbon monoxide.

3.2.2 CO alarms should be installed in a central location outside each separate sleeping area, on every level of the home, and in other locations where required by applicable laws, codes, or standards. For the best protection, have CO alarms that are interconnected throughout the home. When one sounds, they all sound.

3.2.3 Follow the manufacturer’s instructions for placement and mounting height.

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3.2.4 Combination smoke-CO alarms must be installed in accordance with requirements for smoke alarms.

3.2.5 CO alarms are not substitutes for smoke alarms and vice versa. Know the difference between the sound of smoke alarms and the sound of CO alarms.

### **3.3 Testing and Replacement**

3.3.1 Test CO alarms at least once a month and replace CO alarms if they fail to respond correctly when tested. The sensors in CO alarms have a limited life. Replace the CO alarm according to manufacturer's instructions, or when the end-of-life signal sounds.

3.3.2 Know the difference between the sound of the CO alarm and the smoke alarm, and their low-battery signals. If the audible low-battery signal sounds, replace the batteries or replace the device. If the CO alarm still sounds, get to a fresh air location and call 9-1-1 or the fire department.

3.3.3 To keep CO alarms working well, follow manufacturer's instructions for cleaning. The instructions are included in the package or can be found on the internet.

### **3.4 Carbon Monoxide Precautions – Inside the Home**

3.4.1 Have fuel-burning heating equipment (fireplaces, furnaces, water heaters, wood stoves, coal stoves, space heaters, and portable heaters) and chimneys inspected by a professional every year.

3.4.2 Open the damper for proper ventilation before using a fireplace.

3.4.3 Never use your oven or stovetop to heat your home. The carbon monoxide (CO) gas might kill people and pets.

3.4.4 When purchasing new heating and cooking equipment, select products tested and labeled by a recognized testing laboratory.

3.4.5 Make sure all fuel-burning vented equipment is vented to the outside to avoid carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning. Keep the venting for exhaust clear and unblocked.

### **3.5 Carbon Monoxide Precautions — Outside the Home**

3.5.1 If you need to warm a vehicle, remove it from the garage immediately after starting it. Never run a vehicle or other fueled engine or motor indoors, even if garage doors are open. Make sure the exhaust pipe of a running vehicle is not blocked with snow, ice, or other materials. The carbon monoxide (CO) gas might kill people and pets.

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3.5.2 Make sure vents for the dryer, furnace, stove, and fireplace are clear of snow and other debris.

3.5.3 Only use barbecue grills outside, away from all doors, windows, vents and other building openings. Some can produce carbon monoxide gas (CO). Never use them inside the home or the garage, even if the doors are open.

### **3.6 Portable Generators**

3.6.1 Use portable generators outdoors in well-ventilated areas away from all doors, windows, vents and other building openings to prevent exhaust fumes from entering the home.

3.6.2 When using portable generators, install battery-operated CO alarms or plug-in CO alarms with a battery backup in the home according to the manufacturer's installation Instructions.

### **3.7 If Your CO Alarm Sounds**

3.7.1 Immediately move to a fresh air location (outdoors or by an open window or door). Make sure everyone inside the home is accounted for.

3.7.2 Call 9-1-1 or the fire department from a fresh air location (outdoors or by an open window). Remain at a fresh air location until emergency personnel arrive to assist you.

## **Winter Weather**

A wide range of natural disasters occurs within the United States every year. Natural disasters can have a devastating effect on you and your home.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency's U.S. Fire Administration encourages you to use the following safety tips to help protect yourself, your family and your home from the potential threat of fire during or after a winter storm. You can greatly reduce your chances of becoming a fire casualty by being able to identify potential hazards and following the outlined safety tips.

### **SOME TYPES OF FIRE RELATED HAZARDS PRESENT DURING AND AFTER A WINTER STORM**

1. Alternative heating devices used incorrectly create fire hazards.
2. Damaged or downed utility lines can present a fire and life safety hazard.
3. Water damaged appliances and utilities can be electrically charged.
4. Frozen water pipes can burst and cause safety hazards.

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5. Leaking gas lines, damaged or leaking gas propane containers, and leaking vehicle gas tanks may explode or ignite.
6. Generators are often used during power outages. Generators that are not properly used and maintained can be hazardous.
7. Look for combustible liquids like gasoline, lighter fluid, and paint thinner that may have spilled. Thoroughly clean the spill and place containers in a well-ventilated area.
8. If your home has sustained flood or water damage, and you can safely get to the main breaker or fuse box, turn off the power.
9. Assume all wires on the ground are electrically charged. This includes cable TV feeds.
10. Exposed outlets and wiring could present a fire and life safety hazard.
11. Appliances that emit smoke or sparks should be repaired or replaced.
12. Have a licensed electrician check your home for damage.
13. Smell and listen for leaky gas connections. If you believe there is a gas leak, immediately leave the house and leave the door(s) open.
14. Never strike a match. Any size flame can spark an explosion.
15. Before turning the gas back on, have the gas system checked by a professional.
16. Some smoke alarms may be dependent on your home's electrical service and could be inoperative during a power outage.
17. Check to see if your smoke alarm uses a back-up battery and install a new battery at least once a year.
18. Smoke alarms should be installed on every level of your home.
19. All smoke alarms should be tested monthly. All batteries should be replaced with new ones at least once a year.
20. If there is a fire hydrant near your home, keep it clear of debris for easy access by the fire department.

### **Heating Hazards**

#### 9.1 General Heating

9.1.1 Have a 3-foot (1 meter) "kid-free zone" around open fires and space heaters.

9.1.2 Supervise children whenever a wood or oil stove or other space heater is being used. Use a sturdy metal screen to prevent contact burns, which are more common than flame burns.

9.1.3 All heaters need space. Keep anything that can burn at least 3 feet (1 meter) away from heating equipment.

9.1.4 Use heating equipment that has the label of a recognized testing laboratory.

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9.1.5 Never use your oven or stove for heating. Ovens and stoves are not designed to heat your home.

9.1.6 Install stationary space heating equipment, water heaters, or central heating equipment according to the local codes and manufacturer's instructions.

9.1.7 Have a qualified professional install the equipment.

9.1.8 Make sure all fuel-burning vented equipment is vented to the outside to avoid carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning. Carbon monoxide is created when fuels burn incompletely. Carbon monoxide poisoning can cause illness and even death. Make sure the venting for exhaust is kept clear and unobstructed. This includes removal of snow and ice and other debris around the outlet to the outside.

9.1.9 Choose a CO alarm that has the label of a recognized testing laboratory. Install and maintain CO alarms inside your home to provide early warning of carbon monoxide.

9.1.10 Maintain heating equipment and chimneys by having them cleaned and inspected annually by a qualified professional.

#### **9.2 Portable Electric Space Heaters**

9.2.1 Turn heaters off when you go to bed or leave the room.

9.2.2 Only purchase and use portable space heaters from a recognized testing laboratory with an automatic shut-off so if they're tipped over they will shut off.

9.2.3 Place the space heater on a solid, flat surface, and place them and their electrical cords away from high traffic areas and doorways.

9.2.4 Plug space heaters directly into receptacle outlets and never into an extension cord or power strip, as it can overload the cord and cause the flexible covering to catch fire.

9.2.4.1 Do not plug anything else into the same outlet as the one you are using for your space heater. This could result in overheating.

9.2.4.2 Check often for a secure plug/outlet fit. If the plug does not fit snugly into the outlet or if the plug becomes very hot, the outlet may need to be replaced. Have a qualified electrician replace the outlet.

9.2.5 Inspect for cracked or damaged cords, broken plugs, or loose connections. Replace before using the space heater.

#### **9.3 Fuel Burning Space Heaters**

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9.3.1 Always use the proper fuel as specified by the manufacturer.

9.3.2 When refueling, allow the appliance to cool first and then refuel outside.

9.3.3 When using the space heater, open a window to ensure proper ventilation.

9.3.4 In portable kerosene or other liquid-fueled space heaters, always use the proper grade of the proper fuel.

9.3.5 All new unvented gas-fired space heaters have an oxygen depletion sensor that detects a reduced level of oxygen in the area where the heater is operating and shuts off the heater before a hazardous level of carbon monoxide accumulates. If you have an older heater without this feature, replace it with one that does.

9.3.6 If the pilot light of your gas heater goes out, allow 5 minutes or more for the gas to go away before trying to relight the pilot. Follow manufacturer's instructions when relighting the pilot. Do not allow gas to accumulate, and light the match before you turn on the gas to the pilot to avoid risk of flashback.

9.3.7 If you smell gas in your gas heater, do not light the appliance. Leave the building immediately and call 9-1-1, the fire department, or the gas company.

#### 9.4 Wood Burning Stoves

9.4.1 Have a qualified professional install stoves, chimney connectors, and chimneys following the manufacturer's instructions.

9.4.2 Wood stoves should bear the label of a recognized testing laboratory.

9.4.3 In wood stoves, burn only dry, seasoned wood. In pellet stoves, burn only dry, seasoned wood pellets.

9.4.4 Start the fire with newspaper, kindling, or fire starters. Never use a flammable liquid, such as lighter fluid, kerosene, or gasoline, to start a fire. They produce invisible vapors that can easily catch fire.

9.4.5 Keep the doors of your wood stove closed unless loading or stoking the live fire.

9.4.6 Allow ashes to cool before disposing of them. Place ashes in a tightly covered metal container and keep the ash container at least 10 feet (3 meters) away from the home and any other nearby buildings. Never empty the ash directly into a trash can. Douse and saturate the ashes with water.

9.4.7 Chimneys and vents need to be cleaned and inspected by a qualified professional at least once a year.

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### 9.5 Fireplaces

9.5.1 Always use a metal or heat-tempered glass screen on a fireplace and keep it in place.

9.5.2 Burn only dry, seasoned wood. Never burn trash in the fireplace. Not only is it cleaner for the environment, it also creates less buildup in the chimney.

9.5.3 Use artificial fire logs according to manufacturer's recommendations. Never burn more than one log at a time.

9.5.4 Use only newspaper and kindling wood or fire starters to start a fire. Never use flammable liquids, such as lighter fluid, kerosene, or gasoline, to start a fire. They produce invisible vapors that can easily catch fire.

9.5.5 Chimneys and vents need to be cleaned and inspected by a qualified professional at least once a year.

9.5.6 Keep children and pets away from the outside vents. Have a "kid-free zone" of at least 3 feet (1 meter) away from the fireplace. Glass doors and screens can remain dangerously hot for several hours after the fire goes out.

9.5.7 Use chimineas, outdoor fireplaces, and fire pits outdoors only and at least 10 feet (3 meters) away from the home or anything that can burn.

### 9.6 Central Heating

9.7.1 Furnaces need to be inspected and serviced at least once a year by a qualified professional.

9.7.2 Keep things that can burn at least 3 feet (1 meter) away from the furnace. Keep the furnace area clean and uncluttered.

9.7.3 If you smell gas, do not light the appliance. Leave the building immediately and call 9-1-1, the fire department, or the gas company.

### **Manufactured Home Safety**

Manufactured homes are transportable structures that are fixed to a chassis and specifically designed to be towed to a residential site. They are not the same as modular or prefabricated homes, which are factory-built and then towed in sections to be installed at a permanent location.

The federal government regulates the construction of manufactured housing. Since 1976, manufactured homes have been required to comply with U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) manufactured housing construction and safety



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standards, which cover a wide range of safety requirements, including fire safety. Post-1976 manufactured homes bear a label certifying compliance with these standards.

The HUD standard has been enhanced over the years and the HUD "Final Rule" for smoke alarms in manufactured homes is largely based upon NFPA 501. Today, new construction of manufactured housing is required to contain, among other provisions:

- Factory installed hard wired or 10 year battery source, interconnected smoke alarms with battery back-up (including alarms inside or immediately adjacent to all rooms designated as sleeping areas, top of the stairs and on the basement ceiling near the stairs)
- Provisions for special devices for hearing and visually impaired persons.

NFPA's national fire data indicate that manufactured homes built to HUD standards (post-1976 construction) have a much lower risk of death and a significantly reduced risk of injury if fire occurs compared to pre-Standard manufactured homes. Despite the federal requirements for factory-installed smoke alarms, 38 percent of 1999 fires in post-HUD Standard manufactured homes were reported as having no smoke alarms present. Since the homes are required to be sold with installed or readily installable smoke alarms, this suggests a problem with detection devices being removed by occupants.

#### Fire Causes

Electrical distribution equipment is the number-one cause of manufactured home fires. Other significant causes of fires in pre- and post-1976 manufactured homes are heating equipment, intentionally set fires, and cooking equipment.

#### In Tennessee

There were 355 manufactured home fires reported statewide in 2013. Those 355 fires claimed the lives of 16 Tennesseans, caused 20 non-fatal injuries and \$6.76 million in property damage. Manufactured home fires accounted for 17 percent of the state's annual home fire fatalities last year.

While manufactured homes are no more prone to fire than homes built on site, the manufactured home fire can be severe. All residential homes can be better protected utilizing built-in fire protection systems such as fire sprinklers. These not only save lives, but property as well.

A fire in a home located in a rural area has a greater chance of becoming a "total loss fire" because of the increased amount of time needed for firefighters to reach the home. Lack of working smoke alarms is also a factor often noted in fatal manufactured home fires.

If buying or renting a manufactured home is in your future, make sure you keep fire safety in mind. By following a few tips and knowing the facts and safety requirements for manufactured homes, you can help keep your family safe.

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### Safety Tips

- Choose a manufactured home built after June 15, 1976, that has the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) label certifying that the home meets the minimum safety standards.
- Keep gasoline, charcoal lighter and other flammable liquids locked in an outdoor shed. Never store items under your manufactured home. Store firewood away from the home.
- Install skirting material to keep leaves and other debris and combustible items from blowing under your manufactured home where it could easily catch fire and spread into the home.
- Be sure your manufactured home has enough smoke alarms. If your home does not have smoke alarms in or near every sleeping room and in or near the family/living area(s), immediately install new alarms and fresh batteries to protect these rooms. For the best protection, interconnect all smoke alarms throughout the home. When one sounds, they all sound.
- Have a home fire escape plan that includes two ways out of every room and an outside meeting place. Make sure all ways out of the home are cleared of clutter and easy to use. Practice your fire escape plan at least twice a year.
- If smoke alarms sound when cooking, consider moving the alarm further from the kitchen area or install a photoelectric type alarm which is less sensitive to cooking.
- Consider having a licensed electrician inspect the electrical system in your manufactured home to be sure it is safe and meets applicable National Electrical Code® requirements.
- Never add too many plugs to outlets, extension cords or electrical circuits. If the circuit breaker trips or fuses blow, call a licensed electrician to check your system.
- Have smokers smoke outside the home. Provide large, non-tip ashtrays and empty them frequently. Douse butts with water before throwing them away.
- Do not smoke in bed or in a chair in which you are prone to fall asleep.
- Keep space heaters and candles at least three feet away from anything that can burn. Turn off portable space heaters and blow out candles before falling asleep or when leaving a room.
- When considering a new manufactured home, ask if residential sprinklers are available as an option.

For additional information on manufactured homes, contact the Tennessee Housing Association at 615-256-4733.

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## FEBRUARY 2015

### EVENTS:

- National Burn Awareness Week (February 1-7)

### THEMES:

**SFMO Annual Theme: "It's Fire Safety Time in Tennessee"**

**SFMO Monthly Theme: "Burn Awareness Month"**

### February 2015 Topics

Week 1 – Preventing Scalds & Burns

Week 2 – Fire Safety for Children

Week 3 – Kitchen Grease Fire Safety

Week 4 – Candle with Care

### **National Fire Service History**

- February 5, 1898 - Boston Building Collapse - 6 FF's Killed
- February 7, 1904 - Great Baltimore Fire
- February 13, 1909 - WI Wall Collapse kills 6 FF's
- February 3, 1939 - NY Building Collapse 9 FF's Killed
- February 16, 1955 - Baltimore Building Collapse Kills 6 FF's
- February 14, 1958 - NY Building Collapse Kills 6 FF's
- February 26, 1993 - World Trade Center Bombing
- February 20, 2003 - RI Station Nightclub Fire (100 Deaths)

### **Tennessee Specific History**

- February 9, 1892 - Memphis Conflagration
- February 22, 1978 - Waverly Train Derailment & Explosion

## **NFPA PUBLIC EDUCATION RESOURCES**

### **Preventing Scalds & Burns**

8.1 Preventing Scalds and Burns in the Kitchen

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8.1.1 Teach children that hot things burn.

8.1.2 Place objects so they cannot be pulled down or knocked over.

8.1.3 Turn pot handles away from the stove's edge.

8.1.4 Keep appliance cords coiled and away from counter edges.

8.1.5 Keep hot foods and liquids away from table and counter edges.

8.1.6 Use dry oven mitts or potholders. Hot cookware or tableware can heat moisture in a pot holder or hot pad, resulting in a scald burn.

8.1.7 If you have young children in the home, cook on the stove's back burners.

8.1.8 When children are old enough, teach them to cook safely.

### **8.2 Hot Tap Water and Scald Burns**

8.2.1 Set your water heater to 120 degrees Fahrenheit (49 degrees Celsius).

8.2.2 When bathing or taking a shower, the temperature of the water should not exceed 100 degrees Fahrenheit (38 degrees Celsius).

8.2.3 If you do not install anti-scald devices on tub faucets and shower heads, adjust the thermostat setting on your water heater to 120 degrees Fahrenheit (49 degrees Celsius). The lower temperature lowers the risk of scalds and burns.

8.2.4 If you lower the temperature setting on your water heater, you will need to test the temperature at the faucet. Allow water to run 3 to 5 minutes. Test the water with a meat, candy, or cooking thermometer. If the water is hotter than 120 degrees Fahrenheit (49 degrees Celsius), adjust the temperature of the water heater and wait a full day to allow the temperature in the tank to adjust. Retest and readjust as needed.

8.2.5 If children are in the home, don't leave the bathroom while the tub is filling.

8.2.6 Before placing a child in the bath or getting into the tub yourself, test the water.

8.2.7 Fill the tub or sink by running cool water first and then adding hot water. Turn the hot water off first. Mix the water thoroughly and check the temperature by moving your hand, wrist, and forearm through the water. The water should feel warm, not hot, to the touch.

8.2.8 When bathing a young child, seat the child facing away from the faucets so the child cannot reach the faucet. Turn the faucet to the "COLD" position.

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8.2.9 Consider installing anti-scald devices on tub faucets and shower heads to prevent scalds. These devices reduce the water flow to a trickle as the water temperature nears 120 degrees Fahrenheit (49). Anti-scald devices are available online and in some hardware stores.

### **Treatment of Burns**

8.3.1 Treat a burn right away by putting it in cool water. Cool the burn for 3 to 5 minutes. Cover with a clean, dry cloth. Do not apply creams, ointments, sprays, or other home remedies.

8.3.2 Remove all clothing, diapers, jewelry, and metal from the burned area. These can hide underlying burns and retain heat, thereby increasing skin damage.

8.3.3 Call 9-1-1 right away or see your doctor if the burn is:

- (A) On the face, hands, feet, major joints, or genital area, and/or bigger than the injured person's palm
- (B) White, tight, dry (leathery), or painless
- (C) Caused by chemicals or electricity
- (D) Causing difficulty breathing

8.3.4 See your doctor as soon as possible if the burn:

- (A) Does not heal in 2 to 3 days
- (B) Becomes foul smelling
- (C) Develops thick drainage, redness, or swelling
- (D) Causes a fever

### **Fire Safety for Children**

Every day, Americans experience the tragedy of a residential fire. According to the U.S. Fire Administration, more than 3,500 Americans die and approximately 18,300 are injured annually in fires. One of the primary causes of residential fire deaths and injuries for children under 10 is playing with a heat source, which includes lighters and matches. Since 2010, nearly 60 structure fires in Tennessee have resulted from children playing with fire; one such fire claimed the life of a 2-year-old boy in Union County in 2012. In 2008, Tennessee banned the sale of novelty lighters in the state. These lighters usually resemble cartoon characters, toys, guns, watches, musical instruments, and animals, and often include entertaining audio and visual effects. They pose a serious fire hazard, especially in the hands of children who mistake them for toys. Toy-like or novelty lighters have been responsible for injuries, deaths, and accidents across the nation. Below are some facts about children and fire safety. Teach your children the importance of fire-safe habits, and practice a home fire escape plan with them today.

#### Curious kids set fires

- Children 14 and under make up 10-15 percent of all fire deaths.

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- Fifty-two percent of all child fire deaths involve those under 5. These children are usually unable to escape from a fire independently.
- At home, children often play with fire in bedrooms, in closets and under beds to avoid detection. These locations just so happen to contain a lot of flammable materials.
- Too often, child fire-setters are not given proper guidance and supervision by parents and teachers. Consequently, they repeat their fire-setting behavior.

#### Practice fire safety in your home

- Supervise young children closely. Do not leave them alone, even for short periods of time.
- Keep matches and lighters in a locked drawer or cabinet, high out of the reach children.
- Purchase and use only child-resistant lighters. Lighters that look like toys can confuse children and cause fires, injuries, and death. Again, they are prohibited in Tennessee. Do not buy or use them.
- Teach young children to never touch matches and lighters, and to tell a grownup if they find them.
- Take the mystery out of fire by teaching children that fire is a tool for adults, not a toy for children. Never use lighters or matches as a source of amusement for children; they may try to do the same.
- Check under beds and in closets for burned matches, evidence your child might be playing with fire.
- Develop a home fire escape plan, practice it with your children and designate a safe meeting place outside your residence.
- Teach children not to hide from firefighters but to get out quickly and call for help from another location.
- Show children how to crawl on the floor below smoke, to get out of the home and stay out.
- Demonstrate how to stop, drop to the ground and roll if their clothes catch fire.
- Install smoke alarms in every sleeping room, outside each sleeping area and on every level of the home, including the basement. Familiarize children with the sound of smoke alarms. Test smoke alarms each month and replace their batteries according to manufacturer's instructions. Daylight saving time changes, in the fall and spring, are great times to replace smoke alarm batteries if they are not 10-year batteries.
- Entirely replace any smoke alarm that is at least 10 years old.

#### Children Killed and Injured

Mistaking lighters for toys has proved to be deadly: on September 25, 2007, 15-month-old Peyton Edwards and 2-year-old Breydon Edwards of Russellville, Arkansas, died after setting fire to their apartment with a motorcycle-shaped lighter.

Shane St. Pierre was in a grocery store in Livermore, Maine, last June with his mother buying sandwiches. Thinking it might be a flashlight, the 6-year-old picked up a

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miniature baseball bat and flicked the switch. A flame shot out, singeing his eyebrow and burning part of his face. His father, Norm St. Pierre, a fire chief in nearby West Paris, became an advocate for a ban on toylike and novelty lighters. Maine passed a ban on toylike lighters on March 14, 2008.

Children are not the only ones fooled by novelty lighters. Beaverton, Michigan, resident Laura Fowler purchased a novelty lighter for her 4-year-old child after mistaking it for a toy. In 2006, a South Carolina woman shot herself in the hand while attempting to light a cigarette with what she thought was a pistol-shaped novelty lighter.

A fire marshal in Wisconsin was making a purchase at a local home improvement store when his 12-year-old daughter picked up what she believed was a tape measure. When she clicked the button on the tape measure, a flame came out. Fortunately, the child was not hurt, and the store owner voluntarily stopped selling the lighters.

In North Carolina, a 6-year-old boy sustained second-degree burns after playing with a lighter that looked like a toy cell phone. In Maryland, playground equipment was set on fire by three 5-year-old girls using a gun-shaped lighter. In Oregon, one child died and another was permanently brain damaged after a 6-year-old, playing with a lighter that looked like a toy dolphin, started a fire. In another incident, a mother was severely burned after her child, playing with a lighter that resembled a Christmas tree, ignited the mother's bed.

### **Kitchen Grease Fire Safety**

#### Stand by your pan!

How often has the doorbell rung or a child interrupted you while you were cooking, causing you to forget about the chicken you left sizzling on the stove - until smoke filled the house?

This is an all too often occurrence here in Tennessee and nationwide. Cooking is the leading cause of home fires according to the NFPA, and unattended cooking is the culprit in the majority of those incidents.

Fire departments and burn centers alike can attest to the devastation that can stem from unattended cooking. Often when fire departments are called to a cooking-related fire, the residents inform them that they only left the kitchen for a few minutes. Sadly, that's all it takes to go from routine to disaster.

The best way to avoid the devastation that grease fires can cause is to prevent them from happening in the first place. Always stay in the kitchen when frying, grilling, and broiling and keep children away from cooking areas by enforcing a "kid-free zone" of three feet around the stove.

If a *small* fire starts in a pan on the stove:

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- Put on an oven mitt and smother the flames by carefully sliding the lid over the pan. Turn off the burner. Don't remove the lid until it is completely cool.
- Never pour water on a grease fire!
- Never discharge a fire extinguisher onto a pan fire, as it can spray or shoot burning grease around the kitchen, spreading the fire and causing burns.
- Do not try to carry the pan away from the stove! Trying to carry a pot or pan full of burning oil can slosh and splash the hot grease, as well as feed more oxygen to the already burning fire.
- Treat burns only after the fire is contained or the building is completely evacuated. Call 911 if a serious burn is experienced.
- If clothes are caught on fire; Stop, drop, cover your face, and roll back and forth to extinguish them.

When in doubt, just get out! Alert everyone in the home and evacuate immediately. As you leave, close doors behind you to help contain the fire. Once safely outside, call 9-1-1 or the fire department from a cell phone or a neighbor's telephone.

### **Candle Safety**

#### 13.1 General Candle Safety

13.1.1 Consider using battery-operated flameless candles, which can look, smell, and feel like real candles.

13.1.2 When using candles, place them in sturdy, safe candleholders that won't burn.

13.1.3 Protect candle flames with glass chimneys or containers.

13.1.4 Keep candles at least 12 inches (30 centimeters) from anything that can burn.

13.1.5 Never leave a burning candle unattended. Burning candles can start a fire.

13.1.6 Avoid using candles in bedrooms and sleeping areas. Extinguish candles when you leave a room or the home, or go to bed. Keep children and pets away from burning candles.

13.1.7 Be careful not to splatter wax when extinguishing a candle.

13.1.8 Never use a candle where medical oxygen is being used. The two can combine to create a large, unexpected fire. Medical oxygen can cause materials to ignite more easily and burn at a faster rate than normal. It can make an existing fire burn faster and hotter.

13.1.9 Always use a flashlight—not a candle—for emergency lighting.



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13.1.10 Use only battery-powered lights in tents, trailers, motor homes, and boats.

#### 13.2 Candle Use in Home Worship

13.2.1 Lit candles are used in some religious rites and ceremonies in the home. Candles should be used with care.

13.2.2 Lit candles should not be placed in windows, where blinds and curtains can close over them, causing a fire.

13.2.3 Handheld candles should not be passed from one person to another at any time.

13.2.4 To lower the risk of fire, candles should be used by only a few designated adults.

13.2.5 Candles placed on or near tables, altars, or shrines must be maintained under the supervision of an adult.

13.2.6 Candles should be placed in sturdy, non-combustible candle holders that do not allow dripping wax to escape through the bottom of the holder.

13.2.7 If a sturdy, non-combustible candle holder is not available, the candle can be placed on a non-combustible plate.

13.2.8 A handheld candle should be put out before the person holding it moves from the place of initial lighting. Once it is put out, the candle should be placed in an approved, non-combustible container.

13.2.9 The best way to avoid getting burned from splashed wax is to use a candle snuffer instead of blowing on the flame.

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## MARCH 2015

### EVENTS:

- Time Change – “Change Your Clock, Change Your Batteries”

### THEMES:

**SFMO Annual Theme: “It’s Fire Safety Time in Tennessee”**

**SFMO Monthly Theme: “Change your Clock/Change your Batteries”**

### March 2015 Topics

Week 1 – Smoke Alarms: Change your Clock, Change your Battery

Week 2 – High-rise Apartment & Condominium Safety

Week 3 – Medical Oxygen and Fire

Week 4 – Home Escape Planning

### Change Your Clock, Change Your Batteries

Daylight Savings Time begins on Sunday, March 8, 2015. As folks are changing their clocks, remind them to change the batteries in their smoke alarms as well!

### **National Fire Service History**

- March 17, 1890 - Bldg Collapse, IL (13 FFs Killed)
- March 4, 1908 - School Fire - Ohio (174 deaths)
- March 25, 1911 - Triangle Shirtwaist Fire, NY (145 deaths)
- March 18, 1937 - School Explosion, TX (296 Deaths)
- March 10, 1946 - Strand Theater Fire, MA (13 FFs killed)
- March 5, 1949 - Floor Collapse, WV (7 FFs Killed)
- March 26, 2014 - Boston Brownstone Fire (2 FFs killed)

### **Tennessee Specific History**

- March 22, 1916 - Great Nashville Fire
- March 21, 1988 - Oakville Nursing Home Fire Kills 3 in Memphis, TN
- March 1, 2002 - Jefferson City FF Dies in House Fire
- March 14, 2008 - Major Downtown Fire in Baxter, TN

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- March 17, 2013 - Black Bear Ridge Resort Conflagration Destroys 59 Cabins in Sevier County
- March 27, 2013 - Fire sprinkler system activated and contained a fire at the Carey Counseling Center in rural Carroll County preventing death, injury, and major property damage.

## NFPA PUBLIC EDUCATION RESOURCES

### Smoke Alarms

*The State Fire Marshal's Office wants all Tennesseans to have working smoke alarms in their homes. Through the "Get Alarmed" program, the SFMO aims to supply local fire departments with 10-year battery smoke alarms to install for members of their community. **See supplemental information section for more details.***

#### 1.1 Fire Deaths — Smoke Alarms Save Lives

1.1.1 Working smoke alarms save lives, cutting the risk of dying in a home fire in half. Smoke alarms should be installed and maintained in every home.

#### 1.2 Installation

1.2.1 Smoke alarms should be installed in every sleeping room, outside each separate sleeping area, and on every level of the home, including the basement. Larger homes may require additional smoke alarms to provide a minimum level of protection.

1.2.2 For the best protection, interconnect all smoke alarms throughout the home. When one sounds, they all sound.

1.2.3 If you sleep with the bedroom door closed, install smoke alarms inside and outside the bedroom. For the best protection, make sure all the smoke alarms are interconnected.

1.2.4 Wireless battery-operated interconnected smoke alarms are now available.

1.2.5 An ionization smoke alarm is generally more responsive to flaming fires, and a photoelectric smoke alarm is generally more responsive to smoldering fires. For the best protection or where extra time is needed to awaken or assist others, both types of alarms or combination ionization and photoelectric alarms, also known as dual sensor smoke alarms, are recommended.

1.2.6 Choose a smoke alarm that has the label of a recognized testing laboratory.

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1.2.7 Smoke alarms should be installed away from the kitchen to prevent false alarms. Generally, they should be at least 10 feet (3 meters) from a cooking appliance.

1.2.8 A smoke alarm installed between 10 and 20 feet (3 and 6 meters) of a cooking appliance must be a photoelectric type or have a hush feature, which temporarily reduces the sensitivity of the alarm.

### 1.3 Testing and Maintenance

1.3.1 Test smoke alarms at least once a month using the test button.

1.3.2 Make sure everyone in the home understands the warning of the smoke alarm and knows how to respond.

1.3.3 To keep smoke alarms working well, follow the manufacturer's instructions for cleaning. The instructions are included in the package, or can be found on the internet.

### 1.4 People Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

1.4.1 Smoke alarms and alert devices, called accessories, are available for people who are deaf or hard of hearing. Strobe lights throughout the home are activated by smoke alarms and alert people who are deaf to fire conditions. When people who are deaf are asleep, a high-intensity strobe light is required along with a pillow or bed shaker to wake them up and alert them to fire conditions so they can escape. This equipment is activated by the sound of a standard smoke alarm.

1.4.2 Smoke alarm alert devices, called accessories, are available for people who are hard of hearing. These accessories produce a loud, mixed low-pitched sound. This equipment is activated by the sound of the smoke alarm. People who are deaf may find that a pillow or bed shaker is also helpful to wake them up.

1.4.3 Recent research has shown that a loud, mixed low-pitched sound is more effective for waking people of all ages than the loud high-pitched sound of a traditional smoke alarm. As people age, their ability to hear high-pitched sounds decreases.

1.4.4 Choose smoke alarms and accessories for people who are deaf or hard of hearing that have the label of a recognized testing laboratory. Research the available products and select one that best meets your individual needs.

1.4.5 Some alarms are now designed to assist those who cannot climb onto ladders or stools. The alarms can be tested using a television remote.

### 1.5 Battery Replacement

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1.5.1 Smoke alarms with non-replaceable (long-life) batteries are designed to remain effective for up to 10 years. If the alarm chirps, warning that the battery is low, replace the entire smoke alarm right away.

1.5.2 For smoke alarms with any other type of battery, replace batteries at least once a year. If that alarm chirps, replace only the battery.

#### 1.6 Smoke Alarm Replacement

1.6.1 Replace all smoke alarms when they are 10 years old.

1.6.2 Immediately replace any smoke alarm that does not respond properly when tested.

1.6.3 Combination smoke-carbon monoxide alarms should be replaced according to the manufacturer's recommendations.

#### 1.7 Rental Units

1.7.1 All rental units need working smoke alarms.

1.7.2 Check with your local fire department for state and local ordinances on smoke alarm installation and maintenance in rental units:

*In Tennessee, it is the responsibility of the owner/landlord of the rental property to install a smoke alarm in each living unit. It is the responsibility of the tenant to maintain the smoke alarm (however, upon termination of a tenancy, the owner shall ensure that any required smoke alarm is operational prior to reoccupancy). Citations are Tenn. Code Ann. §§ 68-120-112, 68-102-151(b)(1) and 68-102-151(d)(1). See **supplemental information section for more details.***

1.7.3 If you rent and do not have working smoke alarms, contact your landlord or property manager immediately about having alarms installed.

1.7.3.1 If, after you have contacted your landlord or property manager, smoke alarms remain uninstalled, contact your local fire or building department. Some fire departments will install smoke alarms for you.

1.7.4 If a smoke alarm is not working, the battery or the smoke alarm itself may need to be replaced. The responsibility for maintenance of the smoke alarms may be the responsibility of the landlord or the renter, depending on the rental agreement. Maintain the smoke alarm in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

1.7.5 Test smoke alarms at least once a month using the test button or other means such as the mute button on the television remote, if the alarm has that feature.

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1.7.6 Make sure everyone in the home understands the warning of the smoke alarm and knows how to respond.

1.7.7 Dust or vacuum smoke alarms annually and/or whenever the battery is changed. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for cleaning.

#### **High-rise Apartment & Condominium Safety**

People living in a high-rise apartment or condominium building need to think ahead and be prepared in the event of a fire. It is important to know the fire safety features in your building and work together with neighbors to help keep the building as fire-safe as possible.

- For the best protection, select a fully sprinklered building. If your building is not sprinklered, ask the landlord or management to consider installing a sprinkler system.
- Meet with your landlord or building manager to learn about the fire safety features in your building (fire alarms, sprinklers, voice communication procedures, evacuation plans and how to respond to an alarm).
- Know the locations of all available exit stairs from your floor in case the nearest one is blocked by fire or smoke.
- Make sure all exit and stairwell doors are clearly marked, not locked or blocked by security bars and clear of clutter. Report all hazards, such as piled trash, blocked exits, or missing exit lights, to your building manager.
- If there is a fire, pull the fire alarm on your way out to notify the fire department and your neighbors.
- If the fire alarm sounds, feel the door before opening and close all doors behind you as you leave. If it is hot, use another way out. If it is cool, leave by the nearest way out.
- If an announcement is made throughout the building, listen carefully and follow directions.
- Use the stairs to get out — never use the elevator

#### **Escape 101**

- GO to your outside meeting place and stay there. Call the fire department. If someone is trapped in the building, notify the fire department.
- If you can't get out of your apartment because of fire, smoke, or a disability, STUFF wet towels or sheets around the door and vents to keep smoke out.
- CALL the fire department and tell them where you are.
- OPEN a window slightly and wave a bright cloth to signal your location. Be prepared to close the window if it makes the smoke condition worse.
- Fire department evacuation of a high-rise building can take a long time. Communicate with the fire department to monitor evacuation status.

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### Medical Oxygen & Fire

16.1.1 A patient on oxygen should not smoke.

16.1.2 Never smoke in a home where medical oxygen is used. Medical oxygen can cause material to ignite more easily and make fires burn at a faster rate than normal. It can make an existing fire burn faster and hotter.

16.1.3 Post "No Smoking" and "No Open Flames" signs inside and outside the home to remind residents and guests not to smoke.

16.1.4 Keep oxygen cylinders at least 5 feet (1.5 meters) from a heat source, open flames, or electrical devices.

16.1.5 Body oil, hand lotion, and items containing oil and grease can easily ignite. Keep oil and grease away from where oxygen is in use.

16.1.6 Never use aerosol sprays containing combustible materials near the oxygen.

16.1.7 If medical oxygen or an oxygen tank is used in the home, the amount of oxygen in the air, furniture, clothing, hair, and bedding can increase, making it easier for a fire to start and spread. This means that there is a higher risk of fires and burns.

16.1.8 Never use a candle, match, lighter, or other open flame; a fireplace, stove, or other device fueled by gas, kerosene, wood, or coal; or a sparking toy when medical oxygen is in use. Medical oxygen can cause material to ignite more easily and make fires burn at a faster rate than normal. It can make an existing fire burn faster and hotter.

### Home Escape Planning - "Have Two Ways Out!"

#### 4.1 Planning

4.1.1 Make a home escape plan. Draw a map of each level of the home. Show all doors and windows. Discuss the plan with everyone in your household, including visitors.



4.1.2 Children, older adults, and people with disabilities may need assistance to wake up and get out. Ensure that someone will help them.

4.1.3 Teach your children how to escape on their own in case you cannot help them.

4.1.4 Practice your home fire drill with overnight guests.

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4.1.5 Know at least two ways out of every room, if possible. Make sure all doors and windows that lead outside open easily.

4.1.6 If a room has a window air conditioner, make sure there is still a second way out of the room.

4.1.7 If you sleep with the bedroom door closed, install smoke alarms inside and outside the bedroom. For the best protection, make sure all smoke alarms are interconnected.

4.1.8 Windows with security bars, grills, and window guards should have emergency release devices.

4.1.9 Make sure everyone in your home knows how to call 9-1-1 or your local emergency number from a cell phone or from a neighbor's phone.

4.1.10 Make sure everyone in your home knows the sound and understands the warning of the smoke alarm and knows how to respond.

4.1.11 Have an outside meeting place (something permanent, like a tree, light pole, or mailbox) a safe distance in front of the home.

4.1.12 Make sure your house number can be seen day or night from the street.

4.1.13 Have a plan for everyone in your home who has a disability.

#### **4.2 If There Is a Fire**

4.2.1 When the smoke alarm sounds, get out and stay out. Go to the outside meeting place. Call 9-1-1.

4.2.2 If there is smoke blocking your door or first way out, use your second way out.

4.2.3 Smoke is poisonous. If you must escape through smoke, get low and go under the smoke to your way out.

4.2.4 Before opening a door, feel the doorknob and door. If either is hot, leave the door closed and use your second way out.

4.2.5 If there is smoke coming around the door, leave the door closed and use your second way out.

4.2.6 If you open a door, open it slowly. Be ready to shut it quickly if heavy smoke or fire is present.



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4.2.7 If you can't get to someone needing assistance, leave the home and call 9-1-1 or the fire department. Tell the emergency operator where the person is located.

4.2.8 If pets are trapped inside your home, tell fire fighters right away. Never reenter a burning building.

4.2.9 If you can't get out, close the door and cover vents and cracks around doors with cloth or tape to keep smoke out. Call 9-1-1 or your fire department. Say where you are and signal for help at the window with a light-colored cloth or a flashlight.

### Home Fire Escape: Putting Your Plan into Practice

#### 4.3 Practicing the Home Fire Drill

4.3.1 Push the smoke alarm button to start the drill.

4.3.2 Practice what to do in case there is smoke. Get low and go. Get out fast.

4.3.3 Practice using different ways out.

4.3.4 Close doors behind you as you leave.

4.3.5 Get out and stay out. Never go back inside for people, pets, or things.

4.3.6 Go to your outside meeting place.

4.3.7 Practice your home fire escape drill twice a year with everyone in your home. Practice at night and during the daytime.

4.3.8 After you have practiced your home fire escape drill, evaluate it and discuss what worked and what needs to be improved. Improve it and practice again.

### **Close the Door!**

#### Did You Know?

- A door is one of the best pieces of firefighting & lifesaving equipment.
- The simple act of closing the door reduces fire growth & spread, limits damage to your home, & could possibly save lives.
- If you have to leave a room that is on fire, closing the door behind you can be the best decision you make.

While the two most important things to remember in the event of a fire are to get out of the building and call 9-1-1, fire officials point out that simply closing doors behind you on your way out can help stop flames and smoke from spreading to other rooms. It also deprives a fire of oxygen, helping to slow it down and allowing occupants more time to escape.

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## APRIL 2015

### EVENTS:

- Wildfire Safety Awareness Month
- National Safe Digging Month

### THEMES:

**SFMO Annual Theme: "It's Fire Safety Time in Tennessee"**

**SFMO Monthly Theme: "Get your Smokey On"**

### April 2015 Topics

Week 1 – Outdoor Burning

Week 2 – Wildfire Preparedness

Week 3 – Lightning Safety

Week 4 – Vehicle Fire Safety

### **National Fire Service History**

- April 25, 1854 - NY Bldg Collapse (11 FF's killed)
- April 9, 1894 - Bldg Collapse, WI (6 FF's Killed)
- April 12, 1908 - 2,800 Bldgs Burn, MA (17,000 homeless)
- April 18, 1924 - Chicago Wall Collapse (8 FF's Killed)
- April 20, 1926 - Milwaukee Sawdust Explosion (6 FF's Killed)
- April 21, 1930 - Ohio Penitentiary fire (322 deaths)
- April 22, 1940 - MS Rhythm Nightclub Fire (200+ deaths)
- April 16, 1947 - Texas Ship & Plant Explosion (27 FF& 39 civilians killed)
- April 4, 1956 - Wall Collapse, NY (6 FF's Killed)
- April 19, 1995 - Oklahoma City Bombing (168 Killed)
- April 17, 2013 - West Fertilizer Company Explosion (4 citizens, 11 FF's killed)

### **Tennessee Specific History**

- April 13, 1878 - Fire Conflagration in Clarksville, TN
- April 27, 1865 - Memphis Ship Explosion

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- April 27, 1930 - Airplane Crashes into Crowd (7 killed)
- April 11, 1994 - Memphis Highrise Fire (2 FF's Killed)
- April 11, 2007 - Johnny Cash's Home Burns
- April 7, 2012 - Fire Chief Kenny Fox killed while fighting a fire inside the Oak Hill Café in Decaturville. Two other fire fighters were also injured. The fire was determined to be a result of arson.
- April 15, 2012 - Mulch fire at Shamrock Organic Products in Knoxville requires 12 days of firefighting efforts and 24 million gallons of water to control.
- April 12, 2014 - Sevierville cabin housing 22 catches fire. 2 killed.

## **NFPA PUBLIC EDUCATION RESOURCES**

### **Outdoor Burning**

15.1.1 Check with your local fire department or municipality for any restrictions before starting an open air, recreational, or outdoor cooking fire. Obtain proper permits, if required. You might not be permitted to do outdoor burning in some municipalities and during some seasons.

15.1.2 Closely supervise all outdoor fires. Make sure the fire is out before leaving.

15.1.3 Supervise children around any fire outdoors, including campfires, fire pits, chimineas, and outdoor fireplaces.

15.1.4 Permitted open fires (such as bonfires or trash fires) need to be at least 50 feet (15 meters) from anything that can burn.

15.1.5 Permitted recreational fires (such as campfires or fire pits) need to be at least 25 feet (8 meters) away from anything that can burn.

15.1.6 Avoid burning on windy, dry days. When conditions are windy or dry, it is easy for open burning to spread out of control.

15.1.7 Where outdoor burning is allowed, never use gasoline or other flammable or combustible liquids.

15.1.8 When burning, have a hose, bucket of water, or shovel and dirt or sand nearby to extinguish the fire.

### **Wildfire - Are You Prepared?**

## **TENNESSEE STATE FIRE MARSHAL'S OFFICE**

### **Monthly Fire Prevention and Public Education Plan 2014-2015**

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More and more people are making their homes in woodland settings - in or near forests, rural areas, or remote mountain sites. There, homeowners enjoy the beauty of the environment but face the very real danger of wildfire.

Every year across our nation, some homes survive - while many others do not - after a major wildfire. Those that survive almost always do so because their owners had prepared for the eventuality of fire, which is an inescapable force of nature in fire-prone wildland areas. Said in another way - if it's predictable, it's preventable!

Wildfires often begin unnoticed. They spread quickly, igniting brush, trees, and homes. Reduce your risk by preparing now - before wildfire strikes. Meet with your family to decide what to do and where to go if wildfires threaten your area. Follow the steps listed below to protect your family, home, and property.

#### Practice Wildfire Safety

People start most wildfires - find out how you can promote and practice wildfire safety.

- Contact your local fire department, health department, or forestry office for information on fire laws.
- Make sure that fire vehicles can get to your home. Clearly mark all driveway entrances and display your name and address.
- Report hazardous conditions that could cause a wildfire.
- Teach children about fire safety. Keep matches out of their reach.
- Post fire emergency telephone numbers.
- Ensure adequate accessibility by large fire vehicles to your property.
- Plan several escape routes away from your home - by car and by foot.
- Talk to your neighbors about wildfire safety. Plan how the neighborhood could work together after a wildfire. Make a list of your neighbors' skills such as medical or technical. Consider how you could help neighbors who have special needs such as elderly or disabled persons. Make plans to take care of children who may be on their own if parents can't get home.

#### Before Wildfire Threatens

Design and landscape your home with wildfire safety in mind. Select materials and plants that can help contain fire rather than fuel it. Use fire-resistant or noncombustible materials on the roof and exterior structure of the dwelling, or treat wood or combustible material used in roofs, siding, decking, or trim with fire-retardant chemicals evaluated by a nationally recognized laboratory, such as Underwriters Laboratories (UL). Plant fire-resistant shrubs and trees. For example, hardwood trees are less flammable than pine, evergreen, eucalyptus or fir trees.

Your best resource for proper planning is [www.firewise.org](http://www.firewise.org) which has outstanding information used daily by residents, property owners, fire departments, community planners, builders, public policy officials, water authorities, architects and others to assure safety from fire - it really works. Firewise workshops are offered for free all

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across the Nation in communities large and small and free Firewise materials can be obtained easily by anyone interested.

#### Create a 30- to 100-foot safety zone around your home

Within this area, you can take steps to reduce potential exposure to flames and radiant heat. Homes built in pine forests should have a minimum safety zone of 100 feet. If your home sits on a steep slope, standard protective measures may not suffice. Contact your local fire department or forestry office for additional information.

- Rake leaves, dead limbs and twigs. Clear all flammable vegetation.
- Remove leaves and rubbish from under structures.
- Thin a 15-foot space between tree crowns, and remove limbs within 15 feet of the ground.
- Remove dead branches that extend over the roof.
- Prune tree branches and shrubs within 15 feet of a stovepipe or chimney outlet.
- Ask the power company to clear branches from power lines.
- Remove vines from the walls of the home.
- Mow grass regularly.
- Clear a 10-foot area around propane tanks and the barbecue. Place a screen over the grill - use nonflammable material with mesh no coarser than one-quarter inch.
- Regularly dispose of newspapers and rubbish at an approved site. Follow local burning regulations.
- Place stove, fireplace and grill ashes in a metal bucket, soak in water for 2 days; then bury the cold ashes in mineral soil.
- Store gasoline, oily rags and other flammable materials in approved safety cans. Place cans in a safe location away from the base of buildings.
- Stack firewood at least 100 feet away and uphill from your home. Clear combustible material within 20 feet. Use only wood-burning devices evaluated by a nationally recognized laboratory, such as Underwriters Laboratories (UL).
- Review your homeowner's insurance policy and also prepare/update a list of your home's contents.

#### Protect your home

- Regularly clean roof and gutters.
- Inspect chimneys at least twice a year. Clean them at least once a year. Keep the dampers in good working order. Equip chimneys and stovepipes with a spark arrester that meets the requirements of National Fire Protection Association Standard 211. (Contact your local fire department for exact specifications.)
- Use 1/8-inch mesh screen beneath porches, decks, floor areas, and the home itself. Also, screen openings to floors, roof and attic.
- Install a dual-sensor smoke alarm on each level of your home, especially near bedrooms; test monthly and change the batteries at least once each year.
- Keep handy household items that can be used as fire tools: a rake, axe, handsaw or chain saw, bucket and shovel.

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- Keep a ladder that will reach the roof.
- Consider installing protective shutters or heavy fire-resistant drapes.

#### Plan your water needs

- Identify and maintain an adequate outside water source such as a small pond, cistern, well, swimming pool, or hydrant.
- Have a garden hose that is long enough to reach any area of the home and other structures on the property.
- Install freeze-proof exterior water outlets on at least two sides of the home and near other structures on the property. Install additional outlets at least 50 feet from the home.
- Consider obtaining a portable gasoline powered pump in case electrical power is cut off.

#### When Wildfire Threatens

If you are warned that a wildfire is threatening your area, listen to your battery-operated radio for reports and evacuation information. Follow the instructions of local officials.

- Back your car into the garage or park it in an open space facing the direction of escape. Shut doors and roll up windows. Leave the key in the ignition. Close garage windows and doors, but leave them unlocked. Disconnect automatic garage door openers.
- Confine pets to one room. Make plans to care for your pets in case you must evacuate.
- Arrange temporary housing at a friend or relative's home outside the threatened area.

#### If advised to evacuate, do so immediately

- Wear protective clothing - sturdy shoes, cotton or woolen clothing, long pants, a long-sleeved shirt, gloves, and a handkerchief to protect your face.
- Take your Disaster Supplies Kit.
- Lock your home.
- Tell someone when you left and where you are going.
- Choose a route away from fire hazards. Watch for changes in the speed and direction of fire and smoke.

#### If you're sure you have time, take steps to protect your home

Inside:

- Close windows, vents, doors, blinds, or noncombustible window coverings and heavy drapes. Remove lightweight curtains.
- Shut off all utilities if possible, including bottled gas.
- Open fireplace damper. Close fireplace screens.

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- Move flammable furniture into the center of the home away from windows and sliding glass doors.
- Turn on a light in each room to increase the visibility of your home in heavy smoke.

#### Outside:

- Seal attic and ground vents with precut noncombustible coverings.
- Turn off propane tanks.
- Place combustible patio furniture inside.
- Connect the garden hose to outside taps.
- Set up a portable gasoline-powered pump.
- Place lawn sprinklers on the roof and near aboveground fuel tanks. Wetting the roof may help if it is shake-shingled.
- Wet or remove shrubs within 15 feet of the home.
- Gather fire tools.

#### Emergency Supplies

When wildfire threatens, you won't have time to shop or search for supplies. Assemble a Disaster Supplies Kit with items you may need if advised to evacuate. Store these supplies in sturdy, easy-to-carry containers such as backpacks, duffle bags, or trash containers.

#### Include:

- A three-day supply of water (one gallon per person per day) and food that won't spoil.
- One change of clothing and footwear per person and one blanket or sleeping bag per person.
- A first aid kit that includes your family's prescription medications.
- Emergency tools including a battery-powered radio, flashlight, and plenty of extra batteries.
- An extra set of car keys and a credit card, cash, or traveler's checks.
- Sanitation supplies.
- Special items for infant, elderly, or disabled family members.
- An extra pair of eye-glasses.
- Keep important family documents in a waterproof container. Assemble a smaller version of your kit to keep in the trunk of your car.

#### Create a Family Disaster Plan

Wildfire and other types of disasters - hurricane, flood, tornado, earthquake, hazardous materials spill, winter storm - can strike quickly and without warning. You can cope with disaster by preparing in advance and working together. Meet with your family to create a disaster plan. To get started:

#### Complete these steps

- Post emergency telephone numbers by every phone.

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- Show responsible family members how and when to shut off water, gas, and electricity at main switches.
- Contact your local fire department to learn about home fire hazards.
- Learn first aid and CPR. Contact your local American Red Cross chapter for information and training.

### **Lightning Safety**

#### 12.1 Indoor Safety

12.1.1 Follow these guidelines during a lightning storm:

- (A) Stay off corded phones, computers, and other electronic equipment that put you in direct contact with electricity or plumbing.
- (B) Avoid washing your hands, showering, bathing, doing laundry, or washing dishes.
- (C) Stay away from windows and doors.

#### 12.2 Outdoor safety

12.2.1 Follow these guidelines during a lightning storm:

- (A) Seek shelter immediately in a building or a hard-topped vehicle.
- (B) If you are in or on open water, go to land and seek shelter immediately.
- (C) If you can't get to shelter and you feel your hair stand on end, indicating that lightning is about to strike, squat low to the ground on the balls of your feet. Place your hands over your ears and put your head between your knees. Make yourself the smallest target possible and minimize your contact with the ground. This is a last resort when a building or hard-topped vehicle is not available.

12.2.2 If a person is struck by lightning, call 9-1-1 and get medical care immediately. Victims of lightning strikes carry no electrical charge, so attend to them immediately. Administer CPR if needed.

### **Vehicle Fire Safety**

In 2003-2007, U.S. fire departments responded to an average of 287,000 vehicle fires per year. These fires caused an estimated 480 civilian deaths, 1,525 civilian injuries and \$1.3 billion in direct property damage annually.

#### Facts and Figures

- Older teens and young adults are age groups at highest risk of highway vehicle fire death.
- On average, 31 highway vehicle fires were reported per hour. These fires killed one person a day.
- Ninety-three percent of reported fires and 92% of vehicle fire deaths involved highway-type vehicles such as cars, trucks, buses and motorcycles.



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- Three-quarters of highway vehicle fires resulted from mechanical or electrical failures or malfunctions. Collisions or overturns caused only 3% of these fires but 58% of the associated deaths.
- One-third of non-fatal highway vehicle fire injuries occurred when civilians attempted to fight the fire themselves.

Vehicle maintenance is crucial to preventing vehicle fires. The American Automobile Association (AAA) offers the following tips. [Visit the AAA Web site](#) or call +1 800 AAA-HELP for more information.

- Have your vehicles inspected at least annually by a trained, professional technician.
- Watch for fluid leaks under vehicles, cracked or blistered hoses, or wiring that is loose, has exposed metal or has cracked insulation. Have any of these conditions inspected and repaired as soon as possible.
- Be alert to changes in the way your vehicle sounds when running, or to a visible plume of exhaust coming from the tailpipe. A louder than usual exhaust tone, smoke coming from the tailpipe or a backfiring exhaust could mean problems or damage to the high-temperature exhaust and emission control system on the vehicle. Have vehicles inspected and repaired as soon as possible if exhaust or emission control problems are suspected.
- Avoid smoking. If you must smoke, use your vehicle ashtray.
- Drive according to posted speed limits and other traffic rules. Remain alert to changing road conditions at all times.

If a fire occurs:

- **Stop** – If possible, pull to the side of the road and turn off the ignition. Pulling to the side makes it possible for everyone to get out of the vehicle safely. Turn off the ignition to shut off the electric current and stop the flow of gasoline. Put the vehicle in park or set the emergency brake; you don't want the vehicle to move after you leave it. Keep the hood closed because more oxygen can make the fire larger.
- **Get Out** – Make sure everyone gets out of the vehicle. Then move at least 100 feet away. Keep traffic in mind and keep everyone together. There is not only danger from the fire, but also from other vehicles moving in the area.
- **Call for Help** – Call 9-1-1 or the emergency number for your local fire department. Firefighters are specially trained to combat vehicle fires. Never return to the vehicle to attempt to fight the fire yourself. Vehicle fires can be tricky, even for firefighters.

#### Service Station Safety

An estimated 5,020 fires and explosions occurred at public service stations per year from 2004-2008. That means that, on average, one in every 13 service stations experienced a fire. These 7,400 fires caused an annual average of two civilian deaths, 48 civilian injuries and \$20 million in property damage. Follow these safety tips while at the service station:

- Turn off your vehicle's engine when refueling.

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- Keep gasoline and other fuels out of children's sight and reach. Gasoline is highly toxic in addition to being a fire hazard. NEVER allow a child to pump gas.
- Don't smoke, light matches or use lighters while refueling.
- Pay attention to what you're doing. Pumping gas is the transfer of a hazardous substance; don't engage in other activities.
- If you must use any electronic device, such as cell phones, computers or portable radios while refueling, follow manufacturer's instructions.
- Use only the refueling latch on the gasoline dispenser nozzle, if there is one. Do not jam the latch with an object to hold it open.
- To avoid spills, do not top off or overfill your vehicle.
- After pumping gasoline, leave the nozzle in the tank opening for a few seconds to avoid drips when you remove it.
- If a fire starts while you're refueling, don't remove the nozzle from the vehicle or try to stop the flow of gasoline. Leave the area immediately and call for help.
- Don't get in and out of your vehicle while refueling. A static electric charge can develop on your body as you slide across the seat, and when you reach for the pump, a spark can ignite gasoline vapor.
- If you must get into the vehicle during refueling, discharge any static electricity by touching metal on the outside of the vehicle, away from the filling point, before removing the nozzle from your vehicle.
- Use only approved portable containers for transporting or storing gasoline. Make sure the container is in a stable position.
- Never fill a portable container when it is in or on the vehicle. Always place the container on the ground first. Fires caused by static charges have occurred when people filled portable containers in the back of pick-up trucks, particularly those with plastic bed liners. Removing the container will also prevent a dangerous spill of gasoline.
- When filling a portable container, keep the nozzle in direct contact with the container. Fill it only about 95 percent full to leave room for expansion.

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## MAY 2015

### EVENTS:

- National Electric Safety Month
- National Building Safety Month
- National Arson Awareness Month

### THEMES:

**SFMO Annual Theme: "It's Fire Safety Time in Tennessee"**

**SFMO Monthly Theme: "Gearing Up for Summer Safety"**

### May 2015 Topics

Week 1 – Arson Awareness

Week 2 – Sky Lanterns Information

Week 3 – Building Safety/Fire Sprinklers

Week 4 – Hotel/Motel Safety

### **National Fire Service History**

- May 4, 1901 - Jacksonville FL Conflagration (1,700 bldgs burn)
- May 6, 1925 - Atlanta Floor Collapse (6 FF's Deaths)
- May 28, 1977 – KY Beverly Hills Supper Club Fire (165 deaths)

### **Tennessee Specific History**

- May 24, 1807 - Tornadoes Hit East TN
- May 19, 1902 - Coal Creek Mine Explosion
- May 1-4, 2010 - Major Flood Disaster in Tennessee (Nashville Floods)
- May 27, 2011 - Fire at the Hoeganaes atomized steel and iron powder manufacturing plant in Gallatin kills three. This explosion/fire was the third at this plant within five months; together, they killed five workers and injured three others.

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### Arson Awareness Week (May 3-9, 2015)

#### By the Numbers: Intentionally Set Fires

- 210,300 fires are intentionally set each year, representing 13 percent of all fires reported to fire departments.
- Intentionally set fires result in 375 deaths, 1,300 injuries, and \$1 billion in direct property loss annually.
- The incidence of intentionally set fires peaks in the spring (March and April) and again in mid-summer (July).
- Matches (30%) and lighters (15%) are the leading heat sources of intentionally set fires.
- 57% of intentionally set fires occur in outside areas.
- 22% of intentionally set fires occur in structures.
- Light vegetation including grass (26 percent) and rubbish, trash, and waste (11 percent) are the items most often first ignited in intentionally set fires.

Source: U.S. Fire Administration, *Intentionally Set Fires*

Arson can devastate a community, resulting in the decline of the neighborhood through increased insurance premiums, loss of business revenue, and a decline in property values.

Arson is difficult to prosecute, but the effects are felt throughout the community: workers lose jobs, towns and cities lose tax dollars, burned buildings create blighted areas, and innocent people are injured or killed.

Uncontrolled arson, along with other serious crime, creates rampant fear among residents, business customers, and potential visitors. If the community's streets seem out of control, people will be afraid to come into that area to visit or do business. These conditions can quickly lead to a second stage where residents who can afford to move out begin selling homes, even at a loss, to escape before the bottom drops out. Property tax collections plummet, giving the community less and less resources to fight back.

One of the best ways to protect yourself and your family is to have a working smoke alarm. A working smoke alarm greatly reduces your chances of dying in a fire. Make and practice a home fire escape plan and set a meeting place outside. Be sure everyone in your family knows at least two escape routes from their bedrooms.

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### **Sky Lanterns**

To ensure that summer holidays and events are celebrated safely, the State Fire Marshal's Office wants to remind Tennesseans of legislation concerning sky lanterns. They are to be operated only by licensed fireworks professionals.

Sky lanterns, also known as Chinese lanterns or wish lanterns, are unmanned airborne paper lanterns fueled by flame. According to TCA § 68-104-101(9), they are special fireworks, and can be purchased and used by only individuals with a professional license (certified flame effect operator, certified outdoor display operator or certified proximate pyrotechnic operator). The general public cannot purchase or use sky lanterns, and if found in the possession of someone who does not have a professional license issued by the State Fire Marshal, sky lanterns can be confiscated and later destroyed.

Potential problems associated with using these airborne lanterns include ignition of combustible materials (grass, trees, rooftops, or other materials) when they fall from the sky, as well as a possible livestock hazard when animals consume the remains of the lanterns. The summer season also poses an additional hazard as many areas of the state may be experiencing drought conditions that could intensify risk of damage by sky lanterns.

Abiding by this law can help safeguard Tennesseans from fire injury and property loss. To further ensure safety, the State Fire Marshal's Office advises citizens to enjoy fireworks by attending a public display conducted by trained professionals.

### **Home Fire Sprinklers**

#### **2.1 General Tips**

2.1.1 Sprinklers protect lives and property by keeping fires small. Because the sprinkler system reacts so quickly, it can dramatically reduce the heat, flames, and smoke produced in a fire, allowing people more time to escape safely.

2.1.2 Sprinklers activate individually. Only the sprinkler closest to the fire will activate, spraying water directly on the fire and not the rest of the home.

2.1.3 A sprinkler will control or put out a fire with a tiny fraction of the water that would be used by fire department hoses.

2.1.4 Accidental sprinkler discharges are extremely rare.

2.1.5 Home fire sprinklers can be installed in new or existing homes. If you are remodeling or building your home, install a home fire sprinkler system.

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2.1.6 It is especially important to install a home fire sprinkler system in homes with persons who may not be able to get out without help, such as people with disabilities, young children, or older adults.

### 2.2 Installation

2.2.1 Have a qualified contractor install your home fire sprinkler system according to NFPA codes and standards and local fire safety regulations.

2.2.2 Home fire sprinklers work along with smoke alarms to save lives. NFPA data shows that home fire sprinklers reduce the risk of dying in a home fire by 80%.

### 2.3 Maintenance

2.3.1 The fire sprinkler installer must provide instructions on inspecting, testing, and maintaining the system, a simple process that can be performed by the home occupant. A simple visual inspection should be done monthly to ensure that the water valve on the sprinkler is open.

2.3.2 Periodic visual inspection of all sprinklers should be done monthly to make sure nothing is blocking them and nothing is hung or attached to them.

2.3.3 Do a water flow test on the sprinkler system every six months or have a fire sprinkler contractor do the test to ensure all water flow devices are working.

2.3.4 Keep sprinklers clear and free of objects that can interfere with their proper use.

2.3.5 Inspect tanks, if present, monthly to make sure they are full.

2.3.6 Where a pump is used, start it every month to make sure that it works and that it does not trip any circuit breakers.

2.3.7 Whenever painting, make sure sprinklers are not painted by covering them with a bag, which should be removed immediately after the work is done.

### **Hotel/Motel Safety**

5.1.1 Choose a hotel that is protected by both smoke alarms and fire sprinklers.

5.1.2 When you check in, ask the desk clerk what the fire alarm sounds like. If you are deaf or hard of hearing, ask for a room equipped with a smoke alarm and accessories that will awaken you, or a portable smoke alarm made specifically for people who are deaf or hard of hearing to place in your room. You may want to consider bringing one with you.

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5.1.3 Read the escape plan posted in your room.

5.1.4 Count the number of doors between your room and the nearest two fire exits. Open the exit doors to be sure they are unlocked.

5.1.5 Keep your room key by your bed and take it with you if there's a fire. If you cannot escape, you may have to return to your room.

5.1.6 If you hear an alarm, leave immediately, closing all doors behind you.

5.1.7 Use the stairs—never use elevators during a fire.

5.1.8 If you must escape through smoke, get low and go under the smoke to your exit.

5.1.9 If all escape routes are blocked, return to your room. Shut off fans and air conditioners. Stuff wet towels or bedding in the cracks around the doors and vents. Call the fire department to let them know your location. Wait at a window and signal for help with a flashlight or light-colored cloth.

5.1.10 Bring a flashlight; keep it near your bed.

#### **Hotel and Motel Fire Safety List**

The Hotel and Motel Fire Safety Act of 1990 was enacted by Congress to save lives and protect property by promoting fire and life safety in hotels, motels and other places of public accommodation. Fire safety in places of public accommodation is encouraged through creation of a National Master List (NML) of hotel and motel properties that voluntarily comply with the provisions of the Act. The U.S. Fire Administration encourages the traveling public to use the list when making reservations for lodging accommodations, be they for business or pleasure. To search the list, go to <http://apps.usfa.fema.gov/hotel/>.

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### JUNE 2015

#### EVENTS:

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#### THEMES:

**SFMO Annual Theme: "It's Fire Safety Time in Tennessee"**

**SFMO Monthly Theme: "Fireworks Safety Month"**

#### June 2015 Topics

Week 1 – Marina/Boating Electrical Safety

Week 2 – Outdoor Grilling Safety

Week 3 – Campfire Safety

Week 4 – Fireworks Safety

#### **National Fire Service History**

- June 11, 1805 - Detroit, MI Destroyed by Conflagration
- June 5, 1853 - Oswego, NY Great Fire
- June 19, 1867 - Philadelphia Wall Collapse (9 FF deaths)
- June 5, 1946 - Chicago LaSalle Hotel Fire (61 deaths)
- June 17, 1972 - Boston Hotel Fire (9 FF's Killed)
- June 7, 1997 - Chelsea, MA Conflagration (8 Alarms)
- June 16, 2003 - Memphis Family Dollar Fire (2 FFs Killed)
- June 18, 2007 - Charleston Super Sofa Fire (9 FFs Killed)
- June 30, 2013 - Arizona Wildfire (19 FFs Killed)

#### **Tennessee Specific History**

- June 26, 1977 - Maury Co. Jail Fire Kills 42 in Columbia, TN
- June 20, 2006 - Sweetwater Train Derailment
- June 8, 2013 - Home Fire Kills 4 in Carthage, TN



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### Marina/Boating Electrical Safety

There's nothing like a great day out on the water spending time with family and friends, but Tennesseans need to be aware of the danger of electric shock drowning (ESD) and how it can be avoided.

#### IN GENERAL

- To retrieve a person in the water, reach, throw, and row, but don't go.
- Tell others about ESD. Most people have never heard of it and are unaware of the danger.
- Make sure your children understand the importance of not swimming anywhere there could be electricity. Don't let them roughhouse on docks. Tell them what to do if they feel a tingling or shock in the water (see below).
- ESD victims are good candidates for successful Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR). Learn to perform CPR and maintain your training.

#### IN MARINAS

- NEVER swim within 100 yards of any freshwater marina or boatyard.
- Talk to marina owners or operators about the danger of ESD. Ask your marina operator to prohibit swimming at their facility and post signs.
- Ask marina operators if they are aware of and following the guidelines from NFPA 303 (Fire Protection Standard for Marinas and Boatyards) and National Electric Code (NEC) 555.

#### IF YOU HAVE A BOAT

- Have your boat tested once a year to see if it is leaking electricity, or buy a clamp meter and test it yourself. If you find any problems, have your boat inspected by a qualified electrician trained to ABYC standards.
- Have a qualified ABYC electrician install an ELCI on your boat (refer them to the ABYC E-11 Standard) or use an ELCI in the shore power cord. As an alternative, install an isolation transformer on the boat.
- Test the GFCI/ELCI at least once a month or per the manufacturer's specifications.
- DO NOT do your own 120-volt AC electrical work on a boat or hire an electrician who is not familiar with ABYC standards to do it. Many of the problems that lead to electrical faults result from the differences between shore and boat electrical systems and standards.
- DO NOT use common household extension cords for providing shore power to your boat. Use, and encourage other boaters to use, shore power cords built to UL standards.
- NEVER dive on your boat to work on underwater fittings when it is plugged in to shore power, even in saltwater.

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#### **IF YOU HAVE A PRIVATE DOCK**

- NEVER swim within 100 yards of ANY dock using electrical power!
- If you have not electrified your dock or put an AC system on your boat, weigh the risks carefully before doing so.
- If you need electricity on your dock, hire a licensed electrician and make sure the wiring meets the requirements in NFPA 303 and NEC 555. If your dock is already wired, hire an electrician to check that it was done properly. Because docks are exposed to the elements, their electrical systems should be inspected at least once a year.
- Exercise your GFCIs/ELCIs as recommended by the manufacturer.
- If you normally run a power cord from your house or garage to charge your batteries, make sure the outlet has a GFCI and include an ELCI somewhere in the shore power cord.
- NEVER swim off your dock without shutting down all shore power to the boat and the dock.
- Even if you adhere to all of these rules, nearby docks can still present a shock hazard. Educate your neighbors and work together with them to make the waterfront safe.

#### **IF YOU'RE IN THE WATER & FEEL TINGLING OR SHOCKS**

- DO NOT follow your instinct to swim toward the dock!
- SHOUT! Drowning victims cannot speak, let alone shout. Let everyone know what's happening so they'll understand the danger and react appropriately.
- Try to stay upright and back out of the area the way you came, warn any other swimmers in the area of the danger, and then head for shore 100 yards or more from the dock.
- Alert the dock or marina owner and tell them to shut the power off to the dock until they locate the problem and correct it.
- Go to the hospital to make sure there are no lingering effects that could be dangerous.

#### **IF YOU HAVE TO RESCUE AN ESD VICTIM**

- Know how to distinguish drowning from ESD (see Alert for how to recognize "normal" drowning; tingling, numbness, or pain all indicate ESD).
- Fight the instinct to enter the water — many rescuers have died trying to help ESD victims.
- Call for help. Use 911 or VHF Channel 16 as appropriate.
- Turn off the shore power connection at the meter base and/or unplug shore power cords.
- Get the victim out of the water. Remember to reach, throw, row, but don't go.

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- If the person is not breathing or you cannot get a pulse, perform CPR until the Fire Department, Coast Guard, or ambulance arrives.

### **Grilling Safety**

#### 7.8 Barbecue Grills

7.8.1 Propane, charcoal, and wood pellet barbecue grills must only be used outdoors. Indoor use can kill occupants by causing either a fire or carbon monoxide poisoning.

7.8.2 Place the grill well away from siding and deck railings and out from under eaves and overhanging branches according to the manufacturer's instructions. Do not store or use a grill on a porch or balcony, including any porch or balcony on an upper level of the building.

7.8.3 Place the grill a safe distance from lawn games, play areas, and foot traffic.

7.8.4 Keep children and pets away from the grill area. Have a 3-foot (1 meter) "kid-free zone" around the grill.

7.8.5 Use long-handled grilling tools to give the chef plenty of clearance from heat and flames.

7.8.6 Periodically remove grease or fat buildup in trays below the grill so it can't be ignited by a hot grill.

7.8.7 Never leave a barbecue grill unattended.

#### 7.9 Charcoal Grills

7.9.1 Use one of the following methods to start charcoal for cooking.

(A) If you use a "charcoal chimney" to start charcoal for cooking, use a long match to avoid burning your fingers when lighting the paper.

(B) If you use an electrical charcoal starter, be sure to use a grounded extension cord.

(C) If you choose to use lighter fluid, use only fluid intended for charcoal grills.

7.9.2 Never add charcoal starter fluid to coals or kindling that has already been ignited.

7.9.3 Never use gasoline or any other flammable liquid except charcoal starter or lighter fluid to start a charcoal fire.

7.9.4 Store the charcoal starter fluid out of reach of children and away from heat sources.

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7.9.5 Dispose of charcoal coals only after they are cool. Empty the coals into a metal container with a tight-fitting lid that is only used to collect coals. Never empty coals directly into a trash can. Place away from anything that can burn.

### 7.10 Propane Grills

7.10.1 Check the gas tank hose for leaks before using it for the first time each year and after each time the gas tank is reconnected. A soap-and-water solution (1/3 liquid dish soap and 2/3 water) applied to the hose and connection will quickly reveal escaping propane by causing bubbles to form. If you determine by smell or by the soap bubble test that your gas tank hose and connection has a gas leak, do the following:

- (1) Turn off the gas tank and grill.
- (2) If the leak stops, get the grill serviced by a professional before using it again.
- (3) If the leak does not stop, call the fire department.

7.10.2 Use only equipment that has the label of a recognized testing laboratory. Follow the manufacturer's instructions on how to set up the grill and maintain it.

7.10.3 Always store propane gas tanks outside of buildings or garages. Vapors leaked indoors can be easily ignited by pilot lights or electrical equipment, causing an explosion. If you store a gas grill inside during the winter, disconnect the tank or cylinder and leave it outside.

7.10.4 Only light a propane grill with the cover open.

### Camping and Outdoor Fire Safety

#### Fire Pits (Source: [Fire Pits Helper](#))

In recent years, there has been a new concern for the fire service - fire pits. Fire pits are known to be a great source of warmth and ambience. But, with the popularity of fire pits increasing, fire safety has become even more important. There are many things you should consider while setting up and using a fire pit.

- Keep away from flammable material and fluids such as gasoline, diesel fuel, kerosene, and charcoal lighter fluid or vehicles while in use.
- Do not use flammable fluids such as gasoline, alcohol, diesel fuel, kerosene, and charcoal lighter fluid to light or relight fires.
- Exercise the same precautions you would with an open fire.
- Do not allow children to use the fire pit. Keep children and pets away.
- Do not wear flammable or loose fitting clothing such as nylon.
- Do not burn trash, leaves, paper, cardboard, or plywood. Avoid using soft wood such as pine or cedar that likely pop and throw sparks. Use of seasoned hardwood is suggested.
- Before starting the fire, make sure that the lid will still close to extinguish the fire in case of emergency. Do not overload.
- Before you light the fire, check the wind direction.
- Keep a fire extinguisher or garden hose nearby.

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### Campfires

When building a campfire, follow these campfire safety tips from Smokey Bear:

#### How to Pick Your Spot

- DO NOT build a fire at a site in hazardous, dry conditions. DO NOT build a fire if the campground, area, or event rules prohibit campfires.
- FIND OUT if the campground has an existing fire ring or fire pit.
- If there is not an existing fire pit, and pits are allowed, look for a site that is at least fifteen feet away from tent walls, shrubs, trees or other flammable objects. Also beware of low-hanging branches overhead.

#### Extinguishing Your Campfire

- Allow the wood to burn completely to ash, if possible.
- Pour lots of water on the fire; drown all embers, not just the red ones.
- Pour until hissing sound stops.
- Stir the campfire ashes and embers with a shovel.
- Scrape the sticks and logs to remove any embers.
- Stir and make sure everything is wet and they are cold to the touch.
- If you do not have water, use dirt. Mix enough dirt or sand with the embers. Continue adding and stirring until all material is cool. REMEMBER: do NOT bury the fire as the fire will continue to smolder and could catch roots on fire that will eventually get to the surface and start a wildfire. REMEMBER: If it is too hot to touch, it's too hot to leave!

### **Fireworks Safety**

Every year in the United States, we celebrate the Fourth of July with community parades, picnics, barbecues, and fireworks - the things of which happy memories are made. But sadly, Independence Day also includes tragic events resulting from fireworks use. The safest way to enjoy them is through public displays conducted by professional pyrotechnicians hired by communities.

A special study conducted by Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) staff found that 65 percent of all fireworks injuries in 2011 were sustained during the 30 days surrounding the Independence Day holiday. More than half of those injuries were the result of unexpected ignition of the device or consumers not using fireworks as intended. Fireworks injuries most often resulted in burns to the hands and head, including the eyes, face, and ears. According to the special study, sparklers, firecrackers, and aerial devices were associated with the most incidents.

In addition to health risks, fireworks can also put added stress on veterans who may be suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), as well as frighten animals.

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### Who is at Most Risk?

In 2010, U.S. hospital emergency rooms treated an estimated 8,600 people for fireworks-related injuries. 73 percent of these injuries occurred between June 18 - July 18. Of these:

- 65 percent were to males and 35 percent were to females.
- Children under 15 years old accounted for 40 percent of the estimated injuries.
- Children and young adults under 20 years old had 53 percent of the estimated injuries.
- An estimated 900 injuries were associated with firecrackers. Of these, an estimated 30 percent were associated with small firecrackers, 17 percent with illegal firecrackers, and 53 percent where the type of firecracker was not specified.
- An estimated 1,200 injuries were associated with sparklers and 400 with bottle rockets.
- The parts of the body most often injured were hands and fingers (30 percent), legs (22 percent), eyes (21 percent), and head, face, and ears (16 percent).
- More than half of the injuries were burns. Burns were the most common injury to all parts of the body except the eyes, where contusions, lacerations, and foreign bodies in the eye occurred more frequently.

### Did You Know?

The tip of a sparkler burns at a temperature of about 2,000°F? This is hot enough to melt some metals and cause third degree burns.

Availability: In spite of federal regulations and varying state prohibitions, many types of fireworks are still accessible to the public. Distributors often sell fireworks near state borders, where laws prohibiting sales on either side of the border may differ.

Fireworks type: Among the various types of fireworks, some of which are sold legally in some states, bottle rockets can fly into peoples' faces and cause eye injuries; sparklers can ignite clothing (sparklers burn at about 2,000°F); and firecrackers can injure the hands or face if they explode at close range.

Being too close: Injuries may result from being too close to fireworks when they explode; for example, when someone leans over to look more closely at a firework that has been ignited, or when a misguided bottle rocket hits a nearby person.

Lack of physical coordination: Younger children often lack the physical coordination to handle fireworks safely.

Curiosity: Children are often excited and curious around fireworks, which can increase their chances of being injured (for example, when they re-examine a firecracker dud that initially fails to ignite).

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Experimentation: Homemade fireworks (for example, ones made of the powder from several firecrackers) can lead to dangerous and unpredictable explosions. Every year in the United States, we celebrate the Fourth of July with community parades, picnics, barbecues, and fireworks - the things of which happy memories are made. But sadly, Independence Day also includes tragic events resulting from fireworks use. The safest way to enjoy them is through public displays conducted by professional pyrotechnicians hired by communities.

If consumer fireworks are legal where you live and you decide to set them off on your own, be sure to follow these important safety tips:

- Never allow children to handle or ignite fireworks – this includes sparklers.
- Read and follow all warnings and instructions.
- Wear eye protection.
- Be sure other people are out of range before lighting fireworks.
- Never throw or point fireworks at people or animals.
- Only light fireworks outdoors on a smooth, flat surface away from homes, dry leaves and flammable materials.
- Never try to relight fireworks that have not fully functioned.
- Keep a bucket of water and a garden hose nearby in case of a malfunction or fire.

Fire department note: Reporting fireworks incidents properly to the Tennessee Fire Incident Reporting System (TFIRS) is extremely important. The more we know about a problem, the more we can do to prevent it. **See supplemental information section for guidelines on how to document fireworks incidents in TFIRS.**

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## JULY 2015

### EVENTS:

- July 4<sup>th</sup> Fireworks Events

### THEMES:

**SFMO Annual Theme: "It's Fire Safety Time in Tennessee"**

**SFMO Monthly Theme: "Eliminate Hazards Inside & Out"**

### July 2015 Topics

Week 1 – Carbon Monoxide – Generators around RVs and Tents

Week 2 – Residential Hazardous Materials Storage

Week 3 – Fire Safety for People with Disabilities

Week 4 – Fire Safety for Older Adults

### **National Fire Service History**

- July 12, 1919 - Philadelphia Bldg Collapse (6 FF Deaths)
- July 6, 1944 - CT Circus Tent Fire (168 Deaths)
- July 29, 1956 - TX Refinery Fire (19 FF's Killed)
- July 5, 1973 - Kingman, AZ Gas Fire (12 FF's Killed)
- July 23, 1984 - IL Refinery Fire (10 FF's Killed)
- July 1, 1988 - Hackensack, NJ Collapse (5 FF's Killed)
- July 6, 1994 - Storm King Mt Wildfire (14 FF's Died)

### **Tennessee Specific History**

- July 9, 1918 - Nashville Great Train Wreck
- July 9, 1964 - United Airlines Flight Crashed near Parrottsville, TN
- July 14, 1992 - Gatlinburg Downtown Fire



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### **NFPA PUBLIC EDUCATION RESOURCES**

#### **Carbon Monoxide – Generators around RVs and Tents**

As Tennesseans pack up and head out to their favorite campsites, the State Fire Marshal's Office urges campers to be aware of carbon monoxide dangers in and around tents and RVs.

Carbon monoxide (CO), often called "the silent killer," is an invisible, odorless gas created when fuels (such as kerosene, gasoline, wood, coal, natural gas, propane, oil, and methane) burn incompletely. Carbon monoxide can result from a number of camping equipment, including barbecue grills, portable generators or other fuel-powered devices.

"Carbon monoxide levels from barbecue grills or portable generators can increase quickly in enclosed spaces," said State Fire Marshal Julie Mix McPeak. "Campers should keep and use these items in well-ventilated areas to avoid fumes leaking into the openings or vents of RVs and tents."

In September of 2011, five campers died in their sleep in Clarksville, Tennessee when fumes from a generator seeped into their rented RV. The RV's carbon monoxide detector, which could have prevented the deaths, was found to have no batteries.

As a result of this tragedy, rented RVs are now required by Tennessee law to have a functioning carbon monoxide detector before being leased for use. The bill, which went into effect in July, also holds RV rental companies responsible if they fail to document and test the CO detectors in their leased vehicles. It is important to note that this law only applies to rentals. It is still imperative that personal RV owners stay diligent in testing and changing the batteries of the carbon monoxide detectors in their own campers.

Symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning may include headache, nausea and drowsiness. Extremely high levels of poisoning can be fatal, causing death within minutes. Anyone who suspects they are suffering from carbon monoxide poisoning should immediately move to a fresh air location and call 9-1-1 or the fire department.

#### **Important Carbon Monoxide-Poisoning Prevention Tips**

- Only use barbecue grills outside, away from all doors, windows, vents and other shelter openings. Lit or smoldering barbecue grills should never be taken inside a home, tent, or RV.
- Never use a fuel-powered lantern or portable camping stove inside a home, tent or camper/RV.
- Use portable generators outdoors in well-ventilated areas away from all doors, windows, vents and other building openings to prevent exhaust fumes from entering the home.

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- Install and maintain CO alarms inside homes, campers and RVs to provide early warning of carbon monoxide.

### Residential Hazardous Materials Safety

Residential hazardous materials (hazmat) safety is important in preventing fires in and around your home. Hazmat safety involves the proper handling and storage of combustibles and flammable liquids such as gasoline, kerosene, propane, oil, aerosols, certain household cleaning products, and painting supplies.

#### What Are Household Hazardous Materials?

Americans have about half a million different products containing chemicals available for use in our homes. The average household contains between 3 and 10 gallons of materials classified as hazardous. Most people use chemicals safely every day without incident, but as the number of chemical products increases, the rates of improper use and injury also increase.

When most people think of "hazardous materials," they picture trucks full of chemicals, factories, or dumps oozing slime. But, every home can be a warehouse of hazardous materials. Cleansers, bleach, oil, paints, thinners, batteries, medicines, and pesticides are common household items that are "hazardous."

#### Chemical Forms

Chemicals come in three different forms: solids, liquids, and gases. Chemicals in the home are found in all three forms.

- Solids — typically keep their own shape. Solids can be as large chunks, crystals, or powder. Scented carpet powders and rat poison are examples of solids found in the home.
- Liquids — take on the shape of the container and when released or spilled will run everywhere. Bleach, antifreeze, and gasoline are examples of liquids found around the home.
- Gases — spread out to fill any container they occupy. Gases are all around us and constantly moving. Natural gas and propane are examples of gases used in the home.

#### Hazardous Materials Classifications

There are four major classifications of hazardous materials:

- Corrosive materials are capable of dissolving or wearing away gradually. A few common corrosives include metal cleaners, drain cleaners, spot rust removers, and oven cleaners.
- Ignitable materials pose a fire hazard during routine handling. Items in the home that are ignitable include gasoline (or gas/oil mixture), kerosene, diesel fuel, propane tanks, home heating oil, lighter fluid, ammunition, matches, and any items containing alcohol.

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- Reactive materials are those that during routine use tend to react spontaneously with air or water. They are unstable to shock or heat and can generate toxic gases or explode.
- Toxic materials are usually identified with a skull and crossbones. Toxic materials release poisons in sufficient enough quantities to pose a risk to humans.

All of us have many products in our homes and garages that may be hazardous if used, stored or disposed of improperly. They may pose serious fire, health, or environmental hazards. If they are used, stored, and disposed of properly, however, they can be relatively safe.

Familiarize yourself with each product, its location, and purpose. More products are hazardous than you may think. Here are a few of the common ones:

- Automotive fluids
- Household cleaners & Laundry products
- Health and beauty products
- Lawn and garden products
- Barbecue products
- Home maintenance products

#### Home Hazardous Materials Storage

Proper storage and disposal of hazardous materials at home is extremely important. Due to increased public awareness of the dangers of hazardous materials, many communities in the United States now have designated household hazardous waste collection days or permanent collection facilities. Read the product's label to see if specific storage and disposal instructions are listed. If not, or if you are unsure about the proper storage or disposal of a product, contact the manufacturer or call your local government office.

- To reduce the amount of hazardous materials in storage, buy only the amount that you need for the job at hand.
- Store hazardous materials in their original containers. If the label is peeling off, reattach it with transparent tape.
- Use proper storage containers for flammables and combustibles; buy products with safety closures whenever possible.
- Store flammable products, such as gasoline, kerosene, propane gas, and paint thinner in containers away from the house.
- Never store flammables in direct sunlight or near an open flame.
- Because of flammability, store liquid pesticides containing a petroleum-based carrier or solvent in a garage in a locked cabinet.
- Inspect storage areas regularly and be on the lookout for leaky containers, poor ventilation, and the smell of fumes.
- Store hazardous materials out of the reach of children and pets.
- Aerosol containers are pressurized products that sometimes contain flammable or poisonous chemicals. If you dispose of these pressurized containers in the trash, they can be punctured and explode. The can also start a fire. A can is

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empty and safe for disposal if you no longer hear air being released from the container.

- If a household cleaner contains a solvent, do not dump it down the drain or put in the trash. It contains solvents if the label includes the words flammable, combustible, caution, warning, and danger or contains petroleum distillates or aromatic hydrocarbons.
- Don't store chemicals near food.

#### **Fire Safety for People with Disabilities**

- Home fire sprinklers can contain and may even put out a fire in less time than it would take the fire department to arrive. In choosing an apartment or purchasing a home, look for a residence that has home fire sprinklers.
- Test your smoke alarm at least once a month by pushing the test button. If you can't reach the alarm, consider getting alarms that you can test with a flashlight or a television remote.
- For added safety, interconnect all the smoke alarms so that when one sounds they all sound. This gives everyone more time to escape.
- Smoke alarms with non-replaceable (long-life) batteries are designed to remain effective for up to 10 years. They can be helpful for people who have difficulty changing batteries.
- Smoke alarms and alert devices, called accessories, are available for people who are deaf. Strobe lights throughout the home are activated by smoke alarms and alert people who are deaf to fire conditions. When people who are deaf are asleep, a high intensity strobe light is required along with a pillow or bed shaker to wake them up and alert them to fire conditions.
- Accessories are also available for people who are hard of hearing. These accessories produce a loud, mixed low-pitched sound. This equipment is activated by the sound of the smoke alarm and is usually installed next to the bed. People who are deaf may find that a pillow or bed shaker is also helpful to wake them.
- Include everyone in planning and practicing home fire drills. People with disabilities can provide input on the best methods for them to escape.
- Keep a phone by your bed for emergency calls in case you become trapped and are unable to escape.
- If you live in an apartment, meet with your building manager. Request a copy of the building evacuation procedures. Ask about the emergency evacuation drills and insist on being included. Learn the accommodations that have been made to meet your needs for evacuation assistance.
- Contact your local fire department about concerns for your safe evacuation. Ask them about the search and rescue procedures for your building.
- Develop relationships with neighbors, who can be trusted to be "buddies" in the event you need assistance with evacuation, but be sure to have multiple back-up plans in case the buddy isn't available at the time of the emergency.

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- Learn the location of the exit stairwells and all routes out of the building. Know the number of doors between your apartment and the nearest exits.

#### Fire Safety for Older Adults

Knowing what to do in the event of a fire is particularly important for older adults. At age 65, people are twice as likely to be killed or injured by fires compared to the population at large. And with our numbers growing every year - in the United States and Canada, adults age 65 and older make up about 12 percent of the population - it's essential to take the necessary steps to stay safe.

#### *Safety tips*

To increase fire safety for older adults, the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) offers the following guidelines:

- **Keep it low:** If you don't live in an apartment building, consider sleeping in a room on the ground floor in order to make emergency escape easier. Make sure that smoke alarms are installed in every sleeping room and outside any sleeping areas. Have a telephone installed where you sleep in case of emergency. When looking for an apartment or high-rise home, look for one with an automatic sprinkler system. Sprinklers can extinguish a home fire in less time that it takes for the fire department to arrive.
- **Sound the alarm:** The majority of fatal fires occur when people are sleeping, and because smoke can put you into a deeper sleep rather than waking you, it's important to have a mechanical early warning of a fire to ensure that you wake up. If anyone in your household is deaf or if your own hearing is diminished, consider installing a smoke alarm that uses a flashing light or vibration to alert you to a fire emergency.
- **Do the drill:** Conduct your own, or participate in, regular fire drills to make sure you know what to do in the event of a home fire. If you or someone you live with cannot escape alone, designate a member of the household to assist, and decide on backups in case the designee isn't home. Fire drills are also a good opportunity to make sure that everyone is able to hear and respond to smoke alarms.
- **Open up:** Make sure that you are able to open all doors and windows in your home. Locks and pins should open easily from inside. (Some apartment and high-rise buildings have windows designed not to open.) If you have security bars on doors or windows, they should have emergency release devices inside so that they can be opened easily. These devices won't compromise your safety, but they will enable you to open the window from inside in the event of a fire. Check to be sure that windows haven't been sealed shut with paint or nailed shut; if they have, arrange for someone to break the seals all around your home or remove the nails.
- **Stay connected:** Keep a telephone nearby, along with emergency phone numbers so that you can communicate with emergency personnel if you're trapped in your room by fire or smoke.

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## **AUGUST 2015**

### **EVENTS:**

- **Back to School!**
- **School Fire Drills All Over the State**

### **THEMES:**

**SFMO Annual Theme: "It's Fire Safety Time in Tennessee"**

**SFMO Monthly Theme: "Back to School with Fire Safety"**

### **August 2015 Topics**

Week 1 – Back to School Safety/Selecting Safe Housing for College Students

Week 2 – Stop, Drop, Roll

Week 3 – Matches & Lighters

Week 4 – Portable Fire Extinguishers

### **National Fire Service History**

- August 5, 1897 - Chicago Grain Elevator Explosion (6 FF Deaths)
- August 1, 1932 - NY Basement Explosion (8 FF's Killed)
- August 5, 1949 - MT Wildland Fire (13 FF's Killed)
- August 17, 1975 - PA Refinery Flashover Fire (8 FF deaths)
- August 2, 1978 - NY Roof Collapse (6 FF's Killed)
- August 29, 2005 - Hurricane Katrina (1,700+ deaths)

### **Tennessee Specific History**

- August 1, 2004 - Carthage Church Collapse (Fire Chief Killed)
- August 5, 2011 - Memphis Valero refinery fire resulted in loss exceeding 15 million dollars.

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### School Safety Facts

In 2003-2006, U.S. fire departments responded to an estimated average of 6,650 structure fires in educational properties, annually. These fires caused an annual average of 88 civilian fire injuries and \$90 million in direct property damage.

- Fire drills must be held at least once a month while school is in session. (Schools located in climates where weather is severe have the option of deferring monthly drills).
- Principals, teachers or other school staff must inspect all exits daily to ensure that stairways, doors and other exits are working properly and are unblocked.
- On the day of the drill, the emergency drill alarm should be sounded on the school fire alarm system. Make sure that everyone can recognize the sound of the alarm and knows what to do when it sounds.
- Teachers, officials and staff should be familiar with the school's fire protection system, including the location of fire alarm pull stations and sprinklers.
- Every room in the school should have a map posted identifying two ways out. In schools with open floor plans, exit paths should be obvious and kept free of obstruction.
- On the day of the fire drill, everyone in the school should participate.
- Students with specific needs should be assigned an adult or a student buddy to assist them. Fire drills are a good opportunity to identify who among the student population requires extra assistance.
- While it's important to make sure that students leave the building as quickly as possible, order is more important than speed when it comes to conducting a safe fire drill.
- Once everyone has safely exited the building, they should remain outside at a predetermined location until the 'all clear' has been given to reenter the school.
- Use rosters to ensure that every student is accounted for.
- Fire drills should be held both at expected and at unexpected times, and under varying conditions in order to simulate the conditions that can occur in an actual emergency.
- School fire drills are a model for students to use in their homes. Encourage students to practice their escape plans at home—just as they do at school.

### **Campus Fire Safety – U.S. Fire Administration**

Each year college and university students, on- and off-campus, experience hundreds of fire-related emergencies nationwide. There are several specific causes for fires on college campuses, including cooking, intentionally set fires, and open flame. Overall, most college-related fires are due to a general lack of knowledge about fire safety and prevention. According to information compiled by [Campus Firewatch](#), the great majority of student fire deaths occur in off-campus housing that lacks insufficient exits, missing or inoperative smoke alarms, and automatic fire sprinklers. Also, use of candles, careless smoking habits, and the misuse of alcohol—which impairs judgment and hampers evacuation efforts—contribute to off-campus housing fire deaths.

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### Selecting Fire-safe Housing for Your College Student

#### Good Questions to Ask Before Moving in or Signing a Lease

1. Are working smoke alarms installed? (Preferably in each bedroom, interconnected to sound all if any one detects smoke)
2. Are there at least two ways to exit your bedroom and your building?
3. Do the upper floors of the building have at least two interior stairs, or a fire escape?
4. Is a sprinkler system installed and maintained?
5. Are the existing electrical outlets adequate for all of the appliances and equipment that you are bringing – without the need for extension cords?
6. Are there EXIT signs in the building hallways to indicate accessible escape routes?
7. Does the building have a fire alarm system installed and maintained?
8. Has the building's heating system been inspected recently (in the last year)?
9. Is the building address clearly posted to allow emergency services to find you quickly in the event of an emergency?
10. Does the sprinkler system or fire alarm system send a signal to the local fire department or campus security?

### **Stop, Drop, and Roll**

6.1.1 If your clothes catch fire, stop, drop, and roll. Stop immediately, drop to the ground, and cover your face with your hands. Roll over and over or back and forth until the fire is out.

6.1.2 If you cannot stop, drop, and roll, keep a blanket or towel nearby to help you or others smother flames. Cover the person with a blanket to smother the fire. If you use a wheelchair, scooter, or other device and are able to get to the floor, lock the device first to stay in place before getting on the floor to roll until the flames are out.

6.1.3 Treat a burn right away by putting it in cool water for 3 to 5 minutes. Cover with a clean, dry cloth. Do not apply creams, ointments, sprays, or other home remedies. Get medical help right away by calling 9-1-1 or the fire department.

### **Matches and Lighters**

14.1.1 Keep matches and lighters high out of the reach of children, in a locked cabinet.

14.1.2 Purchase and use only child-resistant lighters.

14.1.3 Lighters that look like toys can confuse children and cause fires, injuries, and death. Do not buy or use them.

14.1.4 Teach young children to tell a grownup when they find matches or lighters, and to never touch them.



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#### Toylike Lighters - Playing with Fire

Toylike or novelty lighters have been responsible for injuries, deaths, and accidents across the Nation. Children are attracted to novelty lighters because they look like toys. Many of these lighters look like animals, miniature cars, mobile phones, cameras, fishing lures, stacks of coins, markers, and doll accessories. One lighter is nearly identical to the popular rubber ducky bath toy - it even quacks! There are also toylike and novelty lighters that look like tools such as tape measures, drills, hammers, and paint brushes. Ironically, there are even lighters that mimic a Dalmatian donning a fire helmet, a red fire truck, or fire extinguishers.

#### Children Killed and Injured

Mistaking lighters for toys has proved to be deadly: on September 25, 2007, 15-month-old Peyton Edwards and 2-year-old Breydon Edwards of Russellville, Arkansas, died after setting fire to their apartment with a motorcycle-shaped lighter.

Shane St. Pierre was in a grocery store in Livermore, Maine, last June with his mother buying sandwiches. Thinking it might be a flashlight, the 6-year-old picked up a miniature baseball bat and flicked the switch. A flame shot out, singeing his eyebrow and burning part of his face. His father, Norm St. Pierre, a fire chief in nearby West Paris, became an advocate for a ban on toylike and novelty lighters. Maine passed a ban on toylike lighters on March 14, 2008.

Children are not the only ones fooled by novelty lighters. Beaverton, Michigan, resident Laura Fowler purchased a novelty lighter for her 4-year-old child after mistaking it for a toy. In 2006, a South Carolina woman shot herself in the hand while attempting to light a cigarette with what she thought was a pistol-shaped novelty lighter.

A fire marshal in Wisconsin was making a purchase at a local home improvement store when his 12-year-old daughter picked up what she believed was a tape measure. When she clicked the button on the tape measure, a flame came out. Fortunately, the child was not hurt, and the store owner voluntarily stopped selling the lighters.

In North Carolina, a 6-year-old boy sustained second-degree burns after playing with a lighter that looked like a toy cell phone. In Maryland, playground equipment was set on fire by three 5-year-old girls using a gun-shaped lighter. In Oregon, one child died and another was permanently brain damaged after a 6-year-old, playing with a lighter that looked like a toy dolphin, started a fire. In another incident, a mother was severely burned after her child, playing with a lighter that resembled a Christmas tree, ignited the mother's bed.

#### Toylike and Novelty Lighter Legislation

Some local and State governments have taken action by banning the sale of toylike and novelty lighters, and limiting their distribution. Maine was the first State to pass a ban on toylike and novelty lighters, passing the legislation on March 14, 2008. Tennessee also passed a ban in April 2008.

# TENNESSEE STATE FIRE MARSHAL'S OFFICE

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### Portable Fire Extinguishers

A portable fire extinguisher can save lives and property by putting out a small fire or containing it until the fire department arrives, but portable extinguishers have limitations. Because fire grows and spreads so rapidly, the number one priority for residents is to get out safely.

The State Fire Marshal's Office recommends that portable fire extinguishers should only be used by adults who know how to operate them.

#### Use a fire extinguisher only if:

- The fire is confined to a small area, such as a wastebasket, and is not growing
- Everyone is exiting the building and someone has called or is calling 9-1-1
- The room is not filled with smoke
- You have a means of escape identified & the fire is not between you & the escape route
- You have the proper extinguisher for the fire (Not all fire extinguishers are used for the same purpose. For the home, you should select a multi-purpose extinguisher that can be used on several types of fire, such as those extinguishers labeled 'A-B-C.' It should be large enough to put out a small fire, but not so heavy that it is difficult to handle.

#### Additional fire extinguisher safety tips:

- To operate a fire extinguisher, remember the word PASS:
  - Pull the pin. Hold the extinguisher with the nozzle pointing away from you, and release the locking mechanism.
  - Aim low. Point the extinguisher at the base of the fire.
  - Squeeze the lever slowly and evenly.
  - Sweep the nozzle from side-to-side.
- Choose a fire extinguisher that carries the label of a recognized independent testing laboratory.
- Read the instructions that come with the fire extinguisher and become familiar with its parts, operation, and maintenance. Local fire departments often offer hands-on fire extinguisher trainings.
- If the fire does not go out after using one extinguisher, get out.
- Know when to go. Fire extinguishers are one element of a fire response plan, but the primary element is safe escape. Every household should have a home fire escape plan and working smoke alarms.

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## **SEPTEMBER 2015**

### **EVENTS:**

- **Firefighter Safety Month**
- **National Campus Safety Month**

### **THEMES:**

**SFMO Annual Theme: "It's Fire Safety Time in Tennessee"**

**SFMO Monthly Theme: "Campus Fire Safety"**

### **September 2015 Topics**

Week 1 – Fire Safety for College Students

Week 2 – Smoking

Week 3 – Call 911 for Emergencies

Week 4 – Exit Drills in the Home

### **National Fire Service History**

- September 2, 1888 Baltimore Bldg Collapse (7 FF Deaths)
- September 6, 1896 - MI Opera House Collapse (5 FF Deaths)
- September 20, 1902 - Birmingham Church Fire (115 Deaths)
- September 11, 2001 - Terrorist Attacks (3000+ killed including 343 FF's)

### **Tennessee Specific History**

- September 24, 1904 - New Market, Tennessee Train Wreck
- September 20, 1965 - Tennessee Fairgrounds Fire
- September 25, 2003 - Nursing Home Fire kills 15 at NHC Nursing Home, Nashville (no sprinklers; lack of smoke alarms in residents' rooms)
- September 25, 2012 - Fire at Holder Tobacco Warehouse in Hartsville burns approximately 100,000 square feet of the 340,000 square foot facility and involves assistance from at least 5 fire departments.

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### NFPA PUBLIC EDUCATION RESOURCES

#### **College Fire Safety**

As the fall semester approaches, colleges and universities are busy preparing for the arrival of new residents to their campus communities. Some will be first year students moving into the residence halls. Other arriving students will be moving off-campus and living on their own, some for the first time. For most of these students, the last fire safety training they received was in grade school; but with new independence comes new responsibilities. It is important that both off-campus and on-campus students understand fire risks and know the preventative measures that could save their lives. Learn the facts about campus fire safety and be fire-wise!

#### *Off-Campus Fire Safety*

According to the U.S. Department of Education, there are approximately 18,000,000 students enrolled in 4,100 colleges and universities across the country. Approximately two-thirds of the students live in off-campus housing. There are four common factors in a number of these fires:

- Lack of automatic fire sprinklers
- Missing or disabled smoke alarms
- Careless disposal of smoking materials
- Impaired judgment from alcohol consumption

#### *On-Campus Fire Safety*

In cases where fire fatalities have occurred on college campuses, alcohol was a factor. There is a strong link between alcohol and fire deaths. Alcohol abuse often impairs judgment and hampers evacuation efforts. Many other factors contribute to the problem of dormitory housing fires including:

- Improper use of 911 notification systems delays emergency response.
- Student apathy is prevalent. Many are unaware that fire is a risk or threat in the environment.
- Evacuation efforts are hindered since fire alarms are often ignored.
- Building evacuations are delayed due to lack of preparation and preplanning.
- Vandalized and improperly maintained smoke alarms and fire alarm systems inhibit early detection of fires.
- Misuse of cooking appliances, overloaded electrical circuits, and extension cords increase the risk of fires.

#### Safety Precautions for Colleges and Universities

- Provide students with a program for fire safety and prevention.
- Teach students how to properly notify the fire department using the 911 system.
- Install smoke alarms in every dormitory room and every level of housing facilities.
- Maintain and regularly test smoke alarms and fire alarm systems. Replace smoke alarm batteries every semester.
- Regularly inspect rooms and buildings for fire hazards. Ask your local fire department for assistance.

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- Inspect exit doors and windows and make sure they are working properly.
- Create and update detailed floor plans of buildings, and make them available to emergency personnel, resident advisors and students.
- Conduct fire drills and practice escape routes and evacuation plans. Urge students to take each alarm seriously.
- Make sure electrical outlets are not overloaded and extension cords are used properly.
- Learn to properly use and maintain heating and cooking appliances.

### Safety Tips for Students

#### Candles

- Avoid using lighted candles!
- Do not leave candles unattended.
- Keep candles away from draperies and linens.

#### Cooking

- Cook only where it is permitted.
- Keep your cooking area clean and uncluttered.
- If you use electric appliances, don't overload circuits.
- Never leave cooking unattended.
- If a fire starts in a microwave, keep the door closed and unplug the unit.

#### Smoking

- If you smoke, smoke outside.
- Make sure cigarettes and ashes are out. Never toss hot cigarette butts or ashes in the trash can.
- After a party, check for cigarette butts, especially under cushions. Chairs and sofas catch on fire fast and burn fast.
- Be alert - don't smoke in bed! If you are sleepy or have been drinking, put your cigarette out first.

#### Escape Planning

- If you have to escape through smoke, get low and go under the smoke to your exit.
- Before opening a door, feel the door. If it's hot, use your second way out.
- Use the stairs; never use an elevator during a fire.
- If you're trapped, call the fire department and tell them where you are. Seal your door with rags and signal from your window. Open windows slightly at the top and bottom; shut them if smoke rushes in from any direction.
- If you have a disability, alert others of the type of assistance you need to leave the building.

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### Smoking

10.1.1 If you smoke, use only fire-safe cigarettes.

***The Tennessee State Fire Marshal's Office emphasizes that the term "fire-safe cigarettes" does not mean fire-proof. Caution and care must be taken with ALL cigarettes.***

10.1.2 To prevent a deadly cigarette fire, you must be alert. You won't be alert if you are sleepy, have taken medicine or drugs that make you drowsy, or have consumed alcohol.

10.1.3 If you smoke, smoke outside.

10.1.4 Never smoke in bed.

10.1.5 Never smoke where medical oxygen is used. Medical oxygen can cause materials to ignite more easily and make fires burn at a faster rate than normal. It can make an existing fire burn faster and hotter.

10.1.6 Wherever you smoke, use deep, sturdy ashtrays. If ashtrays are not available, use a metal can or pail. Never empty smoking material directly into a trash can. Place away from anything that can burn.

10.1.7 Do not throw out cigarettes into vegetation, potted plants or landscaping, peat moss, dried grasses, mulch, leaves, and other similar items—they can easily catch fire.

10.1.8 Before you throw out butts and ashes, make sure they are out. Put them out in water or sand.

10.1.9 Before going to bed, check under furniture cushions and around places where people smoke for cigarette butts that may have fallen out of sight.

10.1.10 Keep cigarettes, lighters, matches, and other smoking materials up high out of the reach of children, in a locked cabinet.

### Use caution with electronic cigarettes (e-cigs)

- Charge the device as directed by the manufacturer.
- Only use the charger supplied with your device. Do not mix and match components from different manufacturers or from other devices.
- Do not leave unattended while charging.
- Do not over tighten the battery to the charger.
- Remove the battery from charger when fully charged.
- Clean the connections at least once a week

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### **Calling 911 for Emergencies**

In an emergency, call 911 or your local emergency number immediately from any wired or wireless phone. An emergency is any situation that requires immediate assistance from the police, fire department or ambulance. Examples include:

- A fire
- A crime, especially if in progress
- A car crash, especially if someone is injured
- A medical emergency, such as someone who is unconscious, gasping for air or not breathing, experiencing an allergic reaction, having chest pain, having uncontrollable bleeding, or any other symptoms that require immediate medical attention

If you're not sure whether the situation is a true emergency, officials recommend calling 911 and letting the call-taker determine whether you need emergency help.

When you call 911, be prepared to answer the call-taker's questions, which may include:

- The location of the emergency, including the street address
- The phone number you are calling from
- The nature of the emergency
- Details about the emergency, such as a physical description of a person who may have committed a crime, a description of any fire that may be burning, or a description of injuries or symptoms being experienced by a person having a medical emergency

The number of 911 calls placed by people using wireless phones has significantly increased in recent years. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) estimates about 70 percent of 911 calls are placed from wireless phones, and that percentage is growing.

As more Tennesseans eliminate landline phones from their homes, it's important to make sure that they adapt their emergency plans to allow for quick access to their mobile phones in the event of a fire.

While wireless phones are convenient and can be an important public safety tool, they also create unique challenges for emergency response personnel. Unlike landline phones, wireless phones are not associated with one fixed location or address. While the location of the cell site closest to the 911 caller may provide a general indication of the caller's location, that information is usually not specific enough for rescue personnel to deliver assistance to the caller quickly.

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For many people, the ability to call 911 for help in an emergency is one of the main reasons they own a wireless phone. The prompt delivery of wireless 911 calls to local authorities is essential to promoting public safety. Minutes matter in the event of a fire. If a resident panics and is unable to locate or use their phone to report a fire, that time gap could result in a loss of life or property.

Keep the following tips in mind to ensure that emergency responders can reach you and your loved ones quickly in the event of a fire or other emergency:

- Make a habit to place your cell phone close by in a convenient and consistent location so that it can easily be found.
- Keep cell phones charged at all times.
- Make sure children know to go to a neighbor's home (or an approved nearby location) to call 911 if they are unable to access a phone in their own home.
- Make sure you (and your children) can provide an address or solid description of your location, even when traveling.
- Tell the emergency operator the location of the emergency right away.
- Provide the emergency operator with your wireless phone number, so if the call gets disconnected, the emergency operator can call you back.

Be prepared to follow any instructions the call-taker gives you. Many 911 centers can tell you exactly what to do to help in an emergency until help arrives, such as providing step-by-step instructions to aid someone who is choking or needs first aid or CPR.

Finally, do not hang up until the call-taker instructs you to.

If you dial 911 by mistake, or if a child in your home dials 911 when no emergency exists, do not hang up—that could make 911 officials think that an emergency exists, and possibly send responders to your location. Instead, simply explain to the call-taker what happened.

### Home Escape Planning - "Have Two Ways Out!"

#### 4.1 Planning

4.1.1 Make a home escape plan. Draw a map of each level of the home. Show all doors and windows. Discuss the plan with everyone in your household, including visitors.



4.1.2 Children, older adults, and people with disabilities may need assistance to wake up and get out. Ensure that someone will help them.

4.1.3 Teach your children how to escape on their own in case you cannot help them.

4.1.4 Practice your home fire drill with overnight guests.



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4.1.5 Know at least two ways out of every room, if possible. Make sure all doors and windows that lead outside open easily.

4.1.6 If a room has a window air conditioner, make sure there is still a second way out of the room.

4.1.7 If you sleep with the bedroom door closed, install smoke alarms inside and outside the bedroom. For the best protection, make sure all smoke alarms are interconnected.

4.1.8 Windows with security bars, grills, and window guards should have emergency release devices.

4.1.9 Make sure everyone in your home knows how to call 9-1-1 or your local emergency number from a cell phone or from a neighbor's phone.

4.1.10 Make sure everyone in your home knows the sound and understands the warning of the smoke alarm and knows how to respond.

4.1.11 Have an outside meeting place (something permanent, like a tree, light pole, or mailbox) a safe distance in front of the home.

4.1.12 Make sure your house number can be seen day or night from the street.

4.1.13 Have a plan for everyone in your home who has a disability.

#### **4.2 If There Is a Fire**

4.2.1 When the smoke alarm sounds, get out and stay out. Go to the outside meeting place. Call 9-1-1.

4.2.2 If there is smoke blocking your door or first way out, use your second way out.

4.2.3 Smoke is poisonous. If you must escape through smoke, get low and go under the smoke to your way out.

4.2.4 Before opening a door, feel the doorknob and door. If either is hot, leave the door closed and use your second way out.

4.2.5 If there is smoke coming around the door, leave the door closed and use your second way out.

4.2.6 If you open a door, open it slowly. Be ready to shut it quickly if heavy smoke or fire is present.

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4.2.7 If you can't get to someone needing assistance, leave the home and call 9-1-1 or the fire department. Tell the emergency operator where the person is located.

4.2.8 If pets are trapped inside your home, tell fire fighters right away. Never reenter a burning building.

4.2.9 If you can't get out, close the door and cover vents and cracks around doors with cloth or tape to keep smoke out. Call 9-1-1 or your fire department. Say where you are and signal for help at the window with a light-colored cloth or a flashlight.

#### Home Fire Escape: Putting Your Plan into Practice

#### 4.3 Practicing the Home Fire Drill

4.3.1 Push the smoke alarm button to start the drill.

4.3.2 Practice what to do in case there is smoke. Get low and go. Get out fast.

4.3.3 Practice using different ways out.

4.3.4 Close doors behind you as you leave.

4.3.5 Get out and stay out. Never go back inside for people, pets, or things.

4.3.6 Go to your outside meeting place.

4.3.7 Practice your home fire escape drill twice a year with everyone in your home. Practice at night and during the daytime.

4.3.8 After you have practiced your home fire escape drill, evaluate it and discuss what worked and what needs to be improved. Improve it and practice again.

#### **Close the Door!**

##### Did You Know?

- A door is one of the best pieces of firefighting & lifesaving equipment.
- The simple act of closing the door reduces fire growth & spread, limits damage to your home, & could possibly save lives.
- If you have to leave a room that is on fire, closing the door behind you can be the best decision you make.

While the two most important things to remember in the event of a fire are to get out of the building and call 9-1-1, fire officials point out that simply closing doors behind you on your way out can help stop flames and smoke from spreading to other rooms. It also deprives a fire of oxygen, helping to slow it down and allowing occupants more time to escape.

## **SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION**

### **Get Alarmed Tennessee Smoke Alarm Program**

The State Fire Marshal's Office (SFMO) is on a mission to prevent home fire deaths in Tennessee! Using grant funds awarded by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the SFMO purchased 20,000 smoke alarms in November 2012 to be distributed to fire departments and installed in at-risk homes across the state as part of their Get Alarmed program. The response to this effort was so great that the SFMO continued to fund the program. Since the program's inception, over 50,000 smoke alarms have been distributed across Tennessee.

In order to receive these 10-year battery smoke alarms, fire departments need to access the SFMO's train-the-trainer course on smoke alarm installation. Fire departments that do not have the staff resources to install the alarms are encouraged to present the training course to civic/church/community service groups in their area and designate a portion of their alarm supply to that group for installation within the community. It is important to note that the goal of this program is not to simply hand out alarms, but to install the devices in homes in need across the state while educating residents of fire safety measures.

As of the date of this publication, the Get Alarmed program has been credited with saving the lives of 53 Tennesseans; demonstrating that working smoke alarms can and will save lives. The State Fire Marshal's Office wants all Tennesseans to have these vital devices in their homes.

For further details on the program, including an installation map showcasing statewide progress, visit <http://tn.gov/fire/getalarmed.shtml>.

If your department is interested in participating in the Get Alarmed program, please contact Claire Marsalis with the State Fire Marshal's Office at 615-532-5847 or [claire.marsalis@tn.gov](mailto:claire.marsalis@tn.gov). Members of the public interested in smoke alarm installations should first contact their local fire department, as many of these departments may already have smoke alarms available through this program.

## **Summary of Tennessee Law Regarding Smoke Alarms and Rental Property**

### ***Apartments:***

#### **Tenn. Code Ann. § 68-120-112**

The following information only applies to hotels and apartment buildings with three or more living units with independent cooking and bathroom facilities, but does not apply to condominium projects.

Hotels must install approved smoke detectors in every room that is used for sleeping. The owner or manager of a hotel is responsible for performing all maintenance, repairs and tests necessary to ensure that the smoke detector is functional at all times.

It is unlawful to own or operate an apartment building without installing an approved smoke detector in every living unit within the apartment building. Apartment owners must install approved smoke detectors in every living unit, and the smoke detector must be heard in every sleeping room in the living unit when it is activated. Smoke detectors must be maintained by the residents living in the units. Upon termination of the lease, the owner of the unit must ensure that the smoke detector works properly before another tenant moves in to the unit.

It is illegal to tamper with or remove any smoke detector or a component of a smoke detector required by the above cited laws.

### ***1 and 2 Family Rental Units:***

#### **Tenn. Code Ann. §§ 68-102-151(b)(1) and 68-102-151(d)(1)**

A one-family or two-family rental unit means any rental building containing one (1) or two (2) living units with independent cooking and bathroom facilities, whether designated as a house, cottage, duplex, condominium or by any other name.

It is unlawful to own or operate a one-family or two-family rental unit without installing an approved smoke detector in each living unit. It is the responsibility of the owner/landlord of the rental property to install a smoke detector in each living unit. The smoke detector must be heard in every sleeping room in the living unit when it is activated. It is the responsibility of the tenant to maintain the smoke detector (however, upon termination of a tenancy, the owner shall ensure that any required smoke detector is operational prior to reoccupancy).

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**Using NFIRS/TFIRS to document fireworks-related incidents**

**1. Basic Module:** To collect information common to all incidents. The amount of information needed in each module varies based on type of incident, associated casualties and property losses.

- Incident Type:
  - o 243 Fireworks explosion (no fire), included are all classes of fireworks.
  - o Fires that occur as a result of fireworks should use incident types in the 100 series(fires), then the heat source should be documented.
  - o Injuries that occur as a result of fireworks should use the incident types in the 300 series. Remember you will need to complete the EMS Module, see below.

**2. Fire Module:**

- Heat Source Codes:
  - 54 Fireworks. Included are sparklers, paper caps, party poppers, and firecrackers.
  - 50 Explosives, Fireworks, other

**2. Wildland Fire Module:**

- Heat Source Codes:
  - 54 Fireworks, Includes sparklers, paper caps, party poppers, and firecrackers
  - 50 Explosive, fireworks, other
- Activity of Person involved:
  - 21 Fireworks use

**3. Arson Module:**

- Incendiary Devices:
  - 16 Pyrotechnic Material
  - 17 Explosive Material
- Age and Gender – Very important to document age and gender.

**4. EMS Module:**

- Cause of Illness/Injury Codes:
  - 25 Fireworks, injuries caused by pyrotechnics designed for or used for display purposes. Includes consumer fireworks.
  - 21 Explosives. Includes all injuries related to explosives. Excludes fireworks (25)
- Human Factors:
  - 8 Unattended or unsupervised person, Includes person too young/old to act
- Other Factors:
  - 1 Accidental

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### Public Education Resource Links

- **State Fire Marshal's Office (SMFO) website:** <http://www.tn.gov/fire/>
  - See the latest state fire mortality count (bottom right corner of home page)
  - Access the Monthly Education Plan
  - See results of statewide contests
  - View info on the Get Alarmed program: <http://tn.gov/fire/getalarmed.shtml>
  - Get contact info for all of the divisions of the SFMO
  - Check out the SFMO Facebook page:  
<https://www.facebook.com/#!/TennesseeCommerceAndInsurance>
  - Sign up for FIREcomm, the official communications portal for the SFMO. Be sure to mark the public education section so that you can receive a regular spotlight on fire prevention, as well as weekly press releases you can share with your local media:  
[http://www.tn.gov/notify-app/sign\\_up.html?agencyId=12](http://www.tn.gov/notify-app/sign_up.html?agencyId=12)
  
- **U.S. Fire Administration's website:** <http://www.usfa.fema.gov/>
  - Access national statistics and fire safety tips
  - Get a limited # of free publications (brochures, coloring books, etc.) through the USFA once a year. You just need to create a free account. (Hint: Fire departments with multiple stations can create accounts for each station in order to receive more publications. Just be sure that each account has a different contact person name & address.)  
<https://apps.usfa.fema.gov/publications/>
  - Get stock photos for presentations:  
<http://www.usfa.fema.gov/media/visuals/index.shtm>
  - FEMA Exchange – a searchable library of public education materials shared by organizations:  
<https://www.usfa.fema.gov/library/catalog/exchange.shtm>
  - Video, audio, and print PSAs: <http://www.usfa.fema.gov/media/psa/>
  - Join the “Fire Is Everyone’s Fight” Initiative:  
[http://www.usfa.fema.gov/fireservice/prevention\\_education/strategies/fire\\_is\\_everyones\\_fight/](http://www.usfa.fema.gov/fireservice/prevention_education/strategies/fire_is_everyones_fight/)
  
- **National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) website:** <http://nfpa.org>
  - Access national statistics and fire safety tips
  - Printable safety tip sheets on multiple topics: <http://www.nfpa.org/safety-information/safety-tip-sheets>

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- Videos/PSAs: <http://www.nfpa.org/press-room/public-service-announcements>
- Free access to many of their education programs including “Remembering When” for older adults and “Learn Not to Burn” for children: <http://www.nfpa.org/safety-information/for-public-educators/education-programs>
- **Other Programs/Events/Conferences**
  - **Statewide fire prevention poster contest:** <http://tinyurl.com/nqlrc52>
    - Begins in August. Letters about the contest are mailed to the chiefs each year. Fire departments encourage students to create posters pertaining to the Fire Prevention Week theme. Entries are judged locally and then winners are submitted to the SFMO for state judging. Winners of the state contest receive a certificate signed by the Governor & \$50. They are also honored at an awards event at the TN Fire Service and Code Enforcement Academy that includes a free night's stay at a hotel in the nearby area.
    - See pictures from last year's contest here: <http://tinyurl.com/qhk9387>
  - **TN Public Fire Educator of the Year:** <http://1.tn.gov/1nIWvre>
    - Tennessee fire chiefs can nominate members of their staff who have excelled in providing their local community with fire prevention education. Letters are mailed out to chiefs in August and nominations are due by the end of October. The fire educator of the year is honored at the poster contest banquet.
  - **SFMO Fire Prevention Week Kick-off Event**
    - Held the Friday before Fire Prevention Week on the plaza of the Bicentennial Mall State Park in downtown Nashville. Fire departments from around the state join the SFMO in kicking-off Fire Prevention Week by hosting educational display and demos.
    - Contact Claire Marsalis to participate. View pictures from last year's event here: <http://tinyurl.com/mp5k774>
- **TN Public Educators Association**
  - While not directly affiliated with the SFMO, this association hosts an annual fire prevention education conference each year in July and is a great opportunity to network, share ideas and learn new concepts. Check out their website here: <http://www.tpfea.org/>

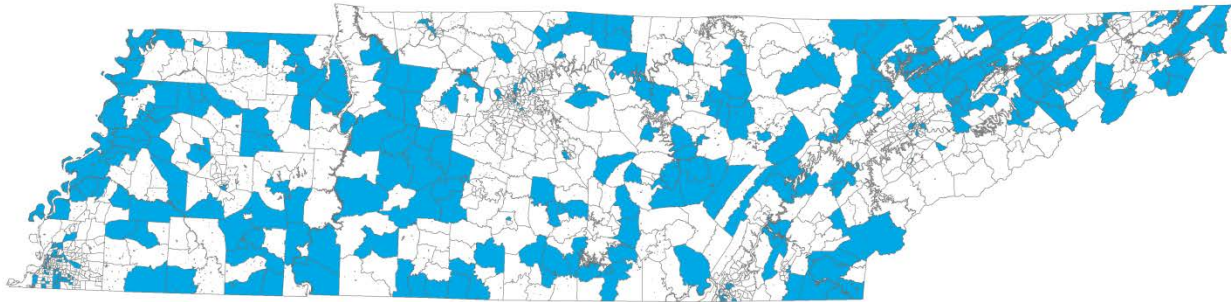
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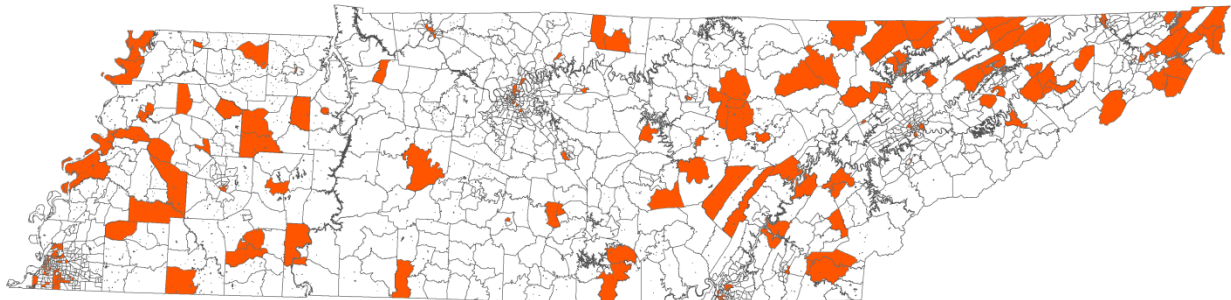
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### STATEWIDE FIRE MORTALITY RISK MAPS

Census Tracts with "Above Average" Risk for Fire Mortalities (N=358)



Census Tracts with "High" Risk for Fire Mortalities (N=199)



Census Tracts with "Highest" Risk for Fire Mortalities (N=78)

