

FIRE PREVENTION NEWS

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**It's Fire Prevention Week. Protect your Family from Fire!
Eliot Fire Department Reinforces Newer Smoke Alarm Recommendations
during Fire Prevention Week, October 9-15, 2011**

October 8, 2011 – What’s the best way to protect your family from fire? Be ahead of the game, of course. With more than 360,000 home fires reported in the United States in 2009, according to the nonprofit National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), your best defense is a good offense. That’s why Eliot’s Fire Department is teaming up with NFPA during the October 9-15, 2011, to let our community know: “It’s Fire Prevention Week. Protect your Family from Fire!” This year’s campaign focuses on preventing the leading causes of home fires – cooking, heating and electrical equipment, as well as candles and smoking materials. Additionally, it urges people to protect their homes and families with life-saving technology and planning.

“In 2009, 2,565 people died in home fires. Nearly all of these deaths could have been prevented by taking a few simple precautions like having working smoke alarms and a home fire escape plan, keeping things that can burn away from the stove and always turning off space heaters before going to bed,” says Jason Cullen of the Eliot Fire Department. “Fire is a dangerous opponent, but by anticipating the hazards, you are much less likely to be one of the nearly 13,000 people injured in home fires each year.”

Eliot Fire Department offers the following tips for protecting your home and family from fire:

- Stay in the kitchen while you are frying, grilling, or broiling food. If you leave the kitchen for even a short period of time, turn off the stove.
- Keep anything that can burn at least three feet away from heating equipment, like the furnace, fireplace, wood stove, or portable space heater.
- Have a three-foot “kid-free zone” around open fires and space heaters.
- Replace or repair damaged or loose electrical cords.
- If you smoke, smoke outside.
- Use deep, wide ashtrays on a sturdy table.

Blow out all candles when you leave the room or go to bed. Avoid the use of candles in the bedroom and other areas where people may fall asleep. “While preventing home fires in Eliot is

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Home Fire Statistics

- In 2002, there were 389,000 reported home fires in the United States, resulting in 2,670 deaths, 13,650 injuries and \$5.9 billion in direct property damage.
- The 2,670 home fire death total in 2002 was the lowest since the NFPA began collecting this data in 1977. Since then these deaths have fallen 54%, and the number of reported home fires has fallen 46% over the same period.
- Nationwide, there was a home fire death every 170 minutes.

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HISTORY OF FIRE PREVENTION WEEK

Fire Prevention Week was established to commemorate the Great Chicago Fire, the tragic 1871 conflagration that killed more than 250 people, left 100,000 homeless, destroyed more than



17,400 structures and burned more than 2,000 acres. The fire began on October 8, but continued into and did most of its damage on October 9, 1871.

According to popular legend, the fire broke out after a cow - belonging to Mrs. Catherine O'Leary - kicked over a lamp, setting first the barn, then the whole city on fire. Chances are you've heard some version of this story yourself; people have been blaming the Great Chicago Fire on the cow and Mrs. O'Leary, for more than 130 years. But recent research by Chicago historian Robert Cormier has helped to debunk this version of events.

The 'Moo' myth

Like any good story, the 'case of the cow' has some truth to it. The great fire almost certainly started near the barn where Mrs. O'Leary kept her five milking cows. But there is no proof that O'Leary was in the barn when the fire broke out - or that a jumpy cow sparked

the blaze. Mrs. O'Leary herself swore that she'd been in bed early that night, and that the cows were also tucked in for the evening.

But if a cow wasn't to blame for the huge fire, what was? Over the years, journalists and historians have offered plenty of theories. Some blamed the blaze on a couple of neighborhood boys who were near the barn sneaking cigarettes. Others believed that a neighbor of the O'Leary's may have started the fire. Some people have speculated that a fiery meteorite may have fallen to earth on October 8, starting several fires that day - in Michigan and Wisconsin, as well as in Chicago.

The biggest blaze that week

While the Great Chicago Fire was the best-known blaze to start during this fiery two-day stretch, it wasn't the biggest. That distinction goes to the Peshtigo Fire, the most devastating forest fire in American history. The fire, which also occurred on October 8th, 1871, and roared through Northeast Wisconsin, burning down 16 towns, killing 1,152 people, and scorching 1.2 million acres before it ended.

Historical accounts of the fire say that the blaze began when several railroad workers clearing land for tracks unintentionally started a brush fire. Before long, the fast-moving flames were whipping through the area 'like a tornado,' some survivors said. It was the small town of Peshtigo, Wisconsin that suffered the worst damage. Within an hour, the entire town had been de-

stroyed.

Eight decades of fire prevention

Those who survived the Chicago and Peshtigo fires never forgot what they'd been through; both blazes produced countless tales of bravery and heroism. But the fires also changed the way that firefighters and public officials thought about fire safety. On the 40th anniversary of the Great Chicago Fire, the Fire Marshals Association of North America (today known as the [International Fire Marshals Association](#)), decided that the anniversary of the Great Chicago Fire should henceforth be observed not with festivities, but in a way that would keep the public informed about the importance of fire prevention. The commemoration grew incrementally official over the years.

In 1920, President Woodrow Wilson issued the first National Fire Prevention Day proclamation, and since 1922, Fire Prevention Week has been observed on the Sunday through Saturday period in which October 9 falls. According to the National Archives and Records Administration's Library Information Center, Fire Prevention Week is the longest running public health and safety observance on record. The President of the United States has signed a proclamation proclaiming a national observance during that week every year since 1925. Fire Prevention Week 2011 is October 9-15. The theme is "It's Fire Prevention Week: Protect your family from Fire."

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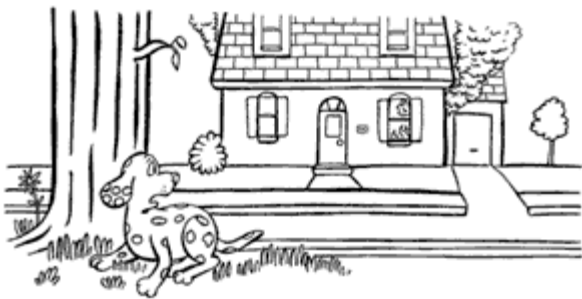


THE STORY OF SPARKY THE FIRE DOG®

A few years ago, before you were born, a little Dalmatian puppy sat outside the fence at the school playground. The puppy loved watching the children play games and laugh. He longed to go inside and play with the children, but he was very shy, so he spent his days running back and forth alongside the fence, jumping, wagging his tail, and sometimes barking "hello."



One day, the puppy followed two children home from school. He watched them go inside their house, then he curled up under a tree in the front yard to take a nap. Suddenly he woke up. When he looked up, he saw sparks and flames and realized that the children's house was on fire. The puppy knew he needed to



get help right away., so he ran down the street to the fire station, barking all the way.

The puppy arrived at the fire station just in time to see the firefighters jump on their trucks and leave. He tried to run behind them, but his little legs could no keep up. By the time he got back to the house, the street was filled with fire trucks and hoses and lots of people. The puppy looked all around for the children but could not see them. He was very worried.

The firefighters worked very hard to save the children's house. After the fire was out, the brave firefighters were getting back on the truck when Firefighter Janet noticed the sad-looking puppy shivering under a tree in the neighbor's yard.

"Look, you guys, it's the little puppy we saw barking at the station," she said. Kneeling down Firefighter Janet scooped up the puppy in her arms "Hey, little guy, where do you live? It's to cold for a puppy you be outside alone," she said. Firefighter Janet's arms felt safe and warm, but the puppy couldn't stop thinking about the children from the school. He lifted his head and looked across the street at the

burned house.

"I know," said Firefighter Janet, "lets take him over to

the neighbor's house where the family is staying. I'll bet he could cheer up the kids who just lost their house." Fire-



fighter Janet carried the puppy in the arms to the neighbor's house, and when she arrived, she brought the little Dalmatian over to where the children and their parents were sleeping. They puppy could barely believe his eyes!

The children were safe! The Dalmatian jumped out of Firefighters Janet's arms and



licked the Children's faces. His tail wagging faster than ever before. The children hugged the puppy and felt a little bit better.

"Do you know who this puppy belongs to?" Firefighter Janet asked the children. The children didn't know, but they recognized him from the schoolyard, and they were glad to see him again. "well, he's a real hero," said Fire-

Fighter friends, to teach children and their families everywhere how to stop fire from happening.

THE END!



Fire Prevention Week Quiz

“Practice Your Escape Plan!” - that was the message of Fire prevention Week 2007. It’s not enough just to make a fire escape plan. To escape safely from a home fire you’ve got to make sure that everyone in the home has practiced the plan as well. Take this new Fire Prevention Week Quiz and see how many questions you can answer correctly. Good Luck!

1. What percentage of household’s have actually developed and practiced a home fire escape plan to ensure they could have escaped quickly and safely?

- a) 50%
- b) 30%
- c) 23%
- d) 75%

2. Smoke alarms are needed:

- a) in every sleeping room, outside each sleeping area and on every level of the home
- b) in all rooms in the home
- c) in all rooms in the home except the bedrooms.
- d) in every sleeping room and on every level of the home.

3. Smoke alarms should be tested at least:

- a) once a week
- b) once a month
- c) once a year
- d) they don’t need to be tested

4. Smoke alarms should be replaced:

- a) when they chirp
- b) when you paint the ceiling
- c) every 10 years
- d) every Fire Prevention Week

5. More than half of all fire deaths result from incidents reported between:

- a) 11:00 pm. and 7:00 a.m.
- b) 4:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m.
- c) 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.
- d) 1:00 a.m. and 6:00 a.m.

6. What kind of fires are the number one cause of home fires and home fire injuries:

- a) Heating
- b) Cooking
- c) Smoking
- d) Electrical

7. Heading down the hall way to the stairs and there is smoke—what should you do?

- a) Grab a towel and block your face
- b) Run
- c) use your second way out
- d) Hold your teeth

8. An escape plan should include:

- a) Two ways out of every room and an outside meeting place
- b) Two ways out of every room and a fire extinguisher and a meeting place
- c) Two ways out of every room, smoke alarms, an outside meeting place and practice
- d) Two ways out of every room, smoke alarms, telephone, and an outside meeting place

9. In a fire you may have as little as two minutes to escape however, a recent poll showed three quarters of Americans think they have _____ before a fire can turn deadly?

- a) Less that 4
- b) Less that 6
- c) Less than 8
- d) Less than 10

10. If you want to be counted, you should be a part of:

- a) Practice your escape plan
- b) the Great American Fire Drill
- c) Get out, Stay out
- d) Go to your meeting place

Answers to the quiz can be found at the bottom of this page.

1. 23 2. in every sleeping room, outside each sleeping area and on every level of the home. 3. once a month 4. every 10 yrs 5. 11:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. 6. cooking 7. use your second way out 8. two ways out of every room, smoke alarms, an outside meeting place and practice. 9. less than 10. the great American fire drill

Continued from Front Page....

always our number one priority, it is not always possible," says Lt. Cullen“

Eliot's residents need to provide the best protection to keep their homes and families safe in the event of a fire. This can be achieved by developing an escape plan which you practice regularly and equipping homes with life-saving technologies like smoke alarms and home fire sprinklers.”

The following tips will help keep your family safe if there is a fire in your home:

- Install smoke alarms inside each bedroom, outside each sleeping area, and on every level of the home (including the basement).
- Interconnect all smoke alarms in the home so when one sounds, they all sound.
- Test smoke alarms at least monthly and replace all smoke alarms when they are 10 years old or sooner if they do not respond when tested.
- Make sure everyone in your home knows how to respond if the smoke alarm sounds.
- Pull together everyone in your household and make a plan. Walk through your home and inspect all possible ways out. Households with children should consider drawing a floor plan of your home, marking two ways out of each room, including windows and doors.
- If you are building or remodeling your home, consider installing home fire sprinklers.
- The Eliot Fire Department will be doing presentation's at Eliot Elementary school during Fire Prevention Week to promote "It's Fire Prevention Week. Protect your Family from Fire!" Children will be given handouts to bring home so the whole family can learn more about the power of prevention and how to protect their own families from fire.

To learn more about "It's Fire Prevention Week. Protect your Family from Fire!" visit NFPA's website at www.firepreventionweek.org.

***Fire in Your Home* covers the A to Z of fire safety to help families turn their "Home Sweet Home" into a "Home Fire-Safe Home".**

In 2010 the Eliot Fire Department purchased [NFPA's Fire In Your Home](#). This booklet was given to every student of Eliot Elementary School. It is our hope that families would keep this booklet as a reference guide. This booklet is filled with tons of information. It is so comprehensive it's like a total fire safety library in a single volume! This handy digest-size, full-color reference is loaded with graphics and illustrations that clarify scores of essential fire facts and safety information that families need to protect themselves and their homes from fire dangers.

Every household will benefit from proven advice on:

- Fire dynamics
- Smoke alarms
- CO alarms
- Automatic sprinkler systems



FIRE IN YOUR HOME 2010

- Portable fire extinguishers
- Home fire escape planning
- Everyday fire prevention strategies involving cooking, smoking, space heaters, electricity, candles, special safety tips for kids, and much more!

Because this booklet is filled with such useful information it is our intent to provide the latest booklet to the incoming Pre-K kids every Fire Prevention Week.

For those that do not have school age kids but would like a copy of this valuable tool or any other Fire Prevention information please stop by the fire station and one can be provided to you.



FIRE IN YOUR HOME 2011



BE HALLOWEEN Safe

Halloween is a fun, and spooky, time of year for kids. Make trick-or-treating safe for your little monsters with a few easy safety tips.

Halloween Fire Safety Tips Sparky® is a trademark of the NFPA.

- »»» **When choosing a costume**, stay away from billowing or long trailing fabric. If your child is wearing a mask, make sure the eye holes are large enough so they can see out.
- »»» **Provide children** with flashlights to carry for lighting or glow sticks as part of their costume.
- »»» 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 candle in a jack-o-lantern. If you use a real candle, use extreme caution. Make sure children are watched at all times when candles are lit. When lighting candles inside jack-o-lanterns, use long, fireplace-style matches or a utility lighter. Be sure to place lit pumpkins well away from anything that can burn and far enough out of way of trick-or-treaters, 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 face with hands, and rolling over and over to put the flames out.)

Use flashlights 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.

If your children are going to **Halloween parties at others' homes**, have them look for ways out of the home and plan how they would get out in an emergency.

Did you know?



Decorations are the first thing to ignite in more than **1,000** reported home fires each year.

Your Source for SAFETY Information
NFPA Public Education Division • 1 Batterymarch Park, Quincy, MA 02169

www.nfpa.org/education

“Most people have a sense of complacency about smoke alarms because they already have one in their home. Fire Prevention Week provides an excellent opportunity to re-educate people about smoke alarms, new technologies and expanded options for installation and maintenance,” says Judy Comoletti, division manager for NFPA public education. Ultimately, we want this years campaign to serve as a call to action for households nationwide to inspect their homes to ensure that their families have the full smoke alarm protection that is recommended.”

Eliot Fire Department offers the following tips for making sure smoke alarms are maintained and working properly:

- Test smoke alarms at least once a month using the test button, and make sure everyone in your home knows their sound.
- If an alarm “chirps,” warning the batter is low, replace the battery right away.
- Replace all smoke alarms, including alarms that use 10-year batteries and hard-wired alarms, when they’re 10 years old (or sooner) if they do not respond properly when tested.
- Never remove or disable a smoke alarm.

ELIOT FIRE DEPARTMENT

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We're on the Web!

WWW.ELIOTFIRE.COM

facebook

Home Fire Statistics continued.....

The statistics below are based on NFPA's most recent analyses:

- Almost half of all fire deaths in 1999 resulted from fires that were reported between 10:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. Only one-fifth of the home fires occur during these hours.
- In 1999, January was the peak month for home fire deaths. December ranked second, and March was third.
- Smoke was the leading cause of home fire deaths overall, but in the months of December, January, and February, smoking and heating equipment caused similar shares of fire deaths. Cooking was the leading cause of home fires and home fire injuries year round.
- Although children five and under make up about 9% of the country's population, they accounted for 17% of the home fire deaths, assigning them a risk twice the national average. Based on 1994-1998 annual averages, adults 65 and older also face a risk twice the average, while people 85 and older have a risk that is almost four-and-a-half times more than average.
- Only one-fifth of the home fire deaths from 1989-1998 were caused by fires in which a smoke alarm was present and operated.
- Most fatal fires kill one or two people. In 2002, 15 home fires killed five or more people. These 15 fires resulted in 90 deaths (87 civilian and 3 firefighters)

A VISIT TO THE FIRE STATION

Each year students from each of the Pre-K & Kindergarten classes visit the Fire Station. For some, especially the Pre-K students this is the first time they have been in a fire station. During their visit to the Fire Station, Members of the Eliot Fire Department discuss with them basic fire prevention techniques.

ever seen a firefighter dressed in all of his protective clothing. This part of the program we try and spend the most time with. A firefighter dressed in all the protective clothing can be scary and overwhelming to a child so during this part of the program we go real slow and talk

the clothing on so that the kids can see the transformation from a plain clothed firefighter to a firefighter with protective clothing including the SCBA-breathing apparatus. From this point on the dressed firefighter will get down on all fours and crawl thru the crowd of kids so that



Firefighter Todd Bisognani

they can get a close up look at what a firefighter sounds like while breathing off of the SCBA. We also let the kids touch all of the gear so that they become familiar with it and not to be frightened.

The most enjoyable part of the visit for the

children is being able to look at all of the big fire trucks and to be able to sit in the front and rear seats.

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