

Safety Spotlight Newsletter

Fire Marshal's Message:

As the holiday and winter season is upon us, we all should be mindful of those we love and even those we may not know in our neighborhood. There are many who are alone and without others close enough or altogether without others to check on them and when in need, a helping hand.

West Virginians are giving and caring people and there are many in this state, who give of their time, talent, and even resources to help those near and far, to make sure they're kept safe from fire and other potential hazards and emergencies within their home.

We can all enjoy the holidays and this winter season a little better if we could just reach out to ask and help remind our family, friends, and even our neighbor a few important questions, when it comes to safety and comfort. Ask the following questions:

Do you have smoke alarms installed in your home? If so, have they been tested in the past month to make sure they work? If they do not work or don't have any installed, ask them if they would mind to have some installed? The American Red Cross, will bring some to their home and install them FREE OF CHARGE; just call 1(844)216-8286.

Do you heat your home or cook with anything other than electric? If so, do you have carbon monoxide alarms installed, to protect against this potentially "silent" and "deadly" killer. If they don't have them and they use fuels and gas such as kerosene, propane, wood, or coal, encourage them to get and install some.

If decorations are being used for the holiday season, make sure: If possible to use flame resistant or fire retardant material when decorating. Make sure the proper lights are used in the proper place; outside lights should not be used indoors and indoor lights should be used outdoors unless labeled for such use.

If candles are being used: 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. Keep candles at least 12 inches away from anything that can burn. IF YOU DO BURN CANDLES, make sure that you... Use candle holders that are sturdy, and won't tip over easily and place them on a sturdy, uncluttered surface.

With the start of the holiday and winter season upon us, let's all do our part for ourselves and others to have a safe and happy holiday; and may your winter be a warm and safe one too! Together, let's make West Virginia a safer place.

Sincerely,

Ken Tyree

State Fire Marshal



Upcoming Events

Fire Commission Meeting

February 9th-10th 2017

Important Announcements

Please check out our webpage for new updates and information.

www.Firemarshal.wv.gov

The deadline for the second quarter NFIRS report grace period ends on December 29th.

The deadline for third quarter NFIRS reports is December 30th.



How to make your life easier using NFIRS

Log into your account at least once every 45 days to keep your account active.

If you're reporting monthly this shouldn't be an issue, but if you're taking turns entering data, be sure you log in even if it's not your turn to enter data, to keep your account active.

Your password must be changed every 89 days.

It must be at least 8 characters long and contain a combination of at least one letter, one number and one special character. You cannot repeat your last 8 passwords. Passwords are case sensitive. Once you decide on a password, write it down and then enter it into the system. Once you've changed your password, put it in a safe place so you can find it later if you need it.

Public Education Network

Winter months are some the hardest for the fire service. We must remind residents how important it is to have proper heating sources and what are safe alternative heat practices. as well as getting a smoke alarm installed into their homes. We'd like to thank the various departments and agencies who have helped us install smoke alarms in more than 600 homes in West Virginia. The push for smoke alarms in every home in the state is greatly needed as we continue to see the number of fire fatalities rise. We know a working smoke alarm provides early fire detection, a key component in surviving a fire. We are happy to support the American Red Cross as they continue their Home Fire Campaign and look to get 8,000 smoke alarms installed. We urge our fire departments to get in contact with the Red Cross as they have created a partner direct service program that will provide departments with smoke alarms to install. Contact your local Red Cross or give their regional office a call at (304) 340-3650.



Poster Contest Winners

Our first annual Fire Safety Poster Contest concluded in October, our collection of esteemed judges picked student winners from all over the state. The winning entry was submitted by 4th grade student Will Bryant of Athens Elementary School in Mercer County. Will displayed multiple important fire safety messages that were clear and everyone should practice. Will's poster will be the front cover of our Fire Marshal Fire Safety calendar.



Honorable Mention recipients are:

- Fayette County – Saul Khaaliq, 3rd grade, Mt. Hope Elementary
- Fayette County – Marley Shrewsberry, 1st grade, New River Elementary
- Grant County – Levi Martin, 1st grade, Union Educational Complex
- Grant County – Miranda Martin, 4th grade, Union Educational Complex
- Hampshire County – Gunner Thomas, kindergarten, Romney Elementary
- Harrison County – Melinda Matthews, 2nd grade, North View Elementary
- Harrison County – Mason Johnson, kindergarten, North View Elementary
- Harrison County – Leah Pugh, 3rd grade, Johnson Elementary
- Jefferson County – Lucy Peyton, 2nd grade, Driswood Elementary
- Morgan County – Audrey Helmick, 5th grade, Paw Paw Elementary
- Wayne County – Alley Perry, 5th grade, Lavalette Elementary

The poster contest is used by the SFMO to highlight and promote fire safety awareness throughout West Virginia schools. Starting in August, West Virginia students in grades kindergarten through 5th grade began creating art posters to illustrate the importance of fire safety. We received 55 poster entries this year, with representation from 18 counties.

Our calendar will be available for purchase, proceeds will benefit the Fallen Firefighters Fund.



Code Corner

West Virginia Code 29-3-16b

Use of live trees in public buildings; exceptions

“Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, live trees may be displayed in public buildings if the trees are not decorated with electrical lights or are decorated with U.L. approved miniature lights. The provisions of this section do not apply to public buildings used for education, health care, nursing homes or correctional facilities.”

Definition of a live tree means a tree with the root ball intact; does not apply to a “cut” tree.



Christmas Tree Safety



As you deck the halls this holiday season, be fire smart. A small fire that spreads to a Christmas tree can grow large very quickly.



PICKING THE TREE

- »» Choose a tree with fresh, green needles that do not fall off when touched.



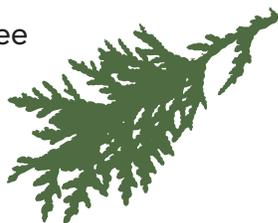
PLACING THE TREE

- »» Before placing the tree in the stand, cut 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.
- »» Make sure the tree is not blocking an exit.
- »» Add water to the tree stand. Be sure to add water daily.



LIGHTING THE TREE

- »» Use lights that are listed by a qualified testing laboratory. Some lights are only for indoor or outdoor use.
- »» Replace any string of lights with worn or broken cords or loose bulb connections. Read manufacturer's instructions for number of light strands to connect.
- »» Never use lit candles to decorate the tree.
- »» Always turn off Christmas tree lights before leaving home or going to bed.



After Christmas

Get rid of the tree after Christmas or when it is dry. Dried-out trees are a fire danger and should not be left in the home or garage, or placed outside against the home.

Check with your local community to find a recycling program.

Bring outdoor electrical lights inside after the holidays to prevent hazards and make them last longer.

FACTS

- ! **One quarter** of home Christmas tree fires are caused by electrical problems.
- ! Although Christmas tree fires are not common, when they do occur, they are more likely to be serious.
- ! A heat source too close to the tree causes roughly **one in every four** of the fires.



Your Source for SAFETY Information

NFPA Public Education Division • 1 Batterymarch Park, Quincy, MA 02169

NFPA's "Needs Assessment Survey of the U.S. Fire Service" report cites extensive needs and challenges facing

November 9, 2016 – Fire service needs are extensive for fire departments of all sizes and in every area, including staffing, training, facilities, apparatus, personal protective equipment (PPE); and health and wellness. Overall, the smaller the community protected, the greater the need. These findings are the results of the National Fire Protection Association's (NFPA) 2015 "U.S. Needs Assessment Survey of the U.S. Fire Service," which was officially released today.

"Today's fire departments are being called upon to protect communities from much more than fire, commonly responsible for additional areas such as emergency medical services (EMS), hazardous materials (Hazmat) response, active shooters, enhanced technical rescue and wildland-urban interface firefighting and other emerging challenges," said Jim Pauley, NFPA president and CEO. "As fire departments work hard to meet the many needs of their communities, we need to ensure that they have the resources to do their jobs safely and effectively."

In September 2015, the Needs Assessment survey was sent out to all U.S. fire departments. The intent of the survey was to capture the level of fire department resources and staffing, identify where fire departments have the resources to meet the needs of their communities and identify gaps.

"This survey represents the most comprehensive look at the needs of U.S. fire departments, and whether those needs are greater than they were five years ago," said Pauley. NFPA has been conducting this study every five years since 2001.



Following are key findings from the report:

- Forty-nine percent of all fire departments have not formally trained all of their personnel involved in structural firefighting, up from 46 percent in 2010.
 - Sixty-nine percent of departments reported that some of their self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) equipment is at least 10 years old, up from 55 percent in 2010.
 - More than two-thirds (72 percent) of departments reported that some of their personal protective clothing is at least 10 years old, up from 63 percent in 2010.
 - Two out of five (43 percent) fire stations are at least 40 years old, up from 32 percent in 2001, when the initial needs assessment survey was conducted.
 - Only one quarter (27 percent) of fire departments have a basic firefighter fitness and health program, slightly down from 30 percent in 2010.
- Forty-three percent of all fire department engines and pumpers are at least 15 years old, down from 51 percent in 2001.