



NEWS

R E L E A S E

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OXENDINE: IS YOUR HOME SAFE? FIRE PREVENTION WEEK IS OCT 5-11

Atlanta - Insurance and Safety Fire Commissioner John Oxendine and the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) remind Georgians that Fire Prevention Week is October 5-11. The theme this year is, "It's Fire Prevention Week: Prevent Home Fires!"

This year, Oxendine and fire personnel around the state will be spreading the word about the dangers of home fires and teaching Georgia residents that with a little extra caution, they can safely manage the leading causes of home fires – cooking, heating, electrical and smoking-related.

"Over the years we've seen numerous home fires caused by the four danger areas as highlighted by the NFPA for Fire Prevention Week," Oxendine said. "By being aware of the risk posted by these activities, you can keep your home and family safe."

Cooking: The majority of home fires start in the kitchen. More than half of all cooking fire injuries occurred when people tried to fight the fire themselves.

Electrical: Extension cord fires are a common source of ignition for home fires, and outnumber fires started by standard power cords by more than two-to-one. Cords and plugs were involved in one-eighth (12%) of the 2002-2005 home electrical distribution and lighting equipment fires, but roughly two-fifths (39%) of associated civilian deaths.

Smoking materials: Smoking materials (i.e., cigarettes, cigars, pipes, etc.) are the leading cause of fire deaths in the United States. Roughly one of every four fire deaths per year in 2002-2005 was attributed to smoking materials. Older adults are at the highest risk of death or injury from smoking-material fires even though they are less likely to smoke than younger adults. The most common material first ignited in home smoking-material fire deaths were mattresses and bedding, and upholstered furniture.

Candles: During 2005, an estimated 15,600 home structure fires started by candles were reported to local fire departments across the U.S. These fires resulted in an estimated 150 civilian deaths, 1,270 civilian injuries and an estimated direct property loss of \$539 million. The top five days for home candle fires were Christmas, Christmas Eve, New Year's Day, New Year's Eve, and Halloween.

For more information on planned activities, please contact your local fire department or call Commissioner Oxendine's Fire Safety Education Division at **404-657-0831**.

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