



NEWS

R E L E A S E

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HUDGENS: IS YOUR HOME SAFE? FIRE PREVENTION WEEK IS OCT 9-15

Atlanta - Insurance and Safety Fire Commissioner Ralph Hudgens and the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) remind Georgians that Fire Prevention Week is October 9-15. The theme this year is, **“Protect Your Family From Fire.”**

This year, Hudgens and fire personnel around the state will be focusing on preventing the leading causes of home fires: cooking, heating and electrical equipment, as well as candles and smoking materials.

“In 2009, 2,565 people died in home fires nationwide. 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 Commissioner Hudgens. “Be sure to change the battery in your smoke detector often. Remember, 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 nationally in home fires each year.”

Hudgens 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 the stove off.
- Keep anything that can burn at least three feet away from heating equipment, like the furnace, fireplace with a fire screen, 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.

To help kick off Fire Prevention Week early, Commissioner Hudgens is conducting a special statewide fire drill on Wednesday, October 5 at 10:00 am. For more information on planned activities, please contact your local fire department or call Commissioner Hudgens' Public Education Division at **404-657-0831**.

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