



Columbia-Richland Fire Department



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It's Fire Prevention Week. Protect your Family from Fire!

Columbia-Richland Fire Department Encourages Residents to Keep their Homes Safe During Fire Prevention Week

Chief Aubrey Jenkins of the Columbia-Richland Fire Department announced today that October 9-15, 2011 is Fire Prevention Week and wants the communities of the City of Columbia and Richland County to 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.

The Columbia-Richland Fire Department will kick-off Fire Prevention Week by hosting the 15th Annual Fire Prevention Parade on Monday, October 10, 2011 to promote "It's Fire Prevention Week. Protect your Family from Fire!" The parade will begin at approximately 11:00 A.M. at the corner of Laurel and Main Street and conclude at the corner of Main and Gervais Street.

Chief Jenkins said 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. "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."

Chief Jenkins 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.

Chief Jenkins continued to state, by developing an escape plan which you practice regularly and equipping homes with life-saving technologies like smoke alarms and home fire sprinklers you can help protect your family and home in the event of a fire.

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.

To learn more about Fire Prevention Week 2011 visit the Columbia-Richland Fire Department's Website at www.columbiasc.net/fire or NFPA's website at www.firepreventionweek.org.