



For Immediate Release
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**Fire Marshal's Office Urges Schools Statewide to
Observe Campus Fire Safety Month**

September declared Campus Fire Safety Month

JACKSON – From kindergartens to college campuses, State Fire Marshal Mike Chaney and the State Fire Marshal's Office urge state educators to focus on fire safety education for their students this month. September has been declared Campus Fire Safety Month by Governor Haley Barbour.

"Each student learning fire safety becomes another person helping reduce fire deaths in the state," Commissioner of Insurance and State Fire Marshal Mike Chaney said.

"What they learn and practice now will teach them how to protect themselves from fire while at school, and later they will carry these messages with them when they grow older and move away from home."

Since January 2005, there have been 14 reported campus based building fires in Mississippi, nine in dormitory or barracks, four in fraternity/sorority houses and one in a non-residential building; there have been three on-campus fire related deaths and an additional death in an office campus fire involving a full-time student. Over 80 percent of campus related fires occur in off-campus housing such as rented houses and apartments.

The five most common factors in campus related fatal fires since 2000 are:

- Missing or disabled smoke alarms
- Careless disposal of smoking materials
- Impaired judgment from alcohol consumption
- Lack of automatic fire sprinklers in off-campus housing

Students will receive fire safety messages on school days via Twitter at twitter.com/msfiresafe. The Mississippi State Fire Marshal can also be found on Facebook. For more information on Campus Fire Safety Month, contact the Mississippi State Fire Marshal's Office at 1-888-648-0877.