



For Immediate Release

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**Fire Marshal's Office Urges Mississippians to
"Stay Fire Smart! Don't Get Burned"**

October 4-10 is National Fire Prevention Week

Jackson — Once a child touches a hot stove, as the old saying goes—he learns his lesson, stay away from a hot stove. What that saying does not take into account is the pain and suffering from burns, and burns should not be part of the learning process.

Preventing needless pain and fire deaths is why the Mississippi State Fire Marshal's Office (SFMO) is teaming up with the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) for Fire Prevention Week 2009 – October 4-10. This year's campaign focuses on ways to keep homes fire safe and prevent painful burns. Additionally, fire safety educators will be teaching local residents how to plan and practice escape from a home in case a fire occurs. The SFMO will be expanding fire safety education throughout the month of October.

The statistics are staggering. Each year roughly 3,000 people die as a result of home fires and burns, and more than 200,000 individuals are seen in the nation's emergency rooms for burn injuries. Through October 1, 2009 there have been 63 reported fire deaths in Mississippi. The State Fire Marshal's Office has been called in to investigate 52 of those deaths. This time last year (2008) there were 51 reported fire deaths in the state and the State Fire Marshal's Office had been asked to investigate 40 of those deaths.

"The most common types of burn injuries result from fire or flame burns, scalds and contact burns," Mississippi Insurance Commissioner and State Fire Marshal Mike Chaney said.

“Burns are painful and can result in serious scarring and even death. When we take extra caution in our homes to ensure that the curling iron is out of children’s reach or pot handles are turned away from the edge of the stove, such injuries are entirely preventable. Keeping our homes safe from fire and preventing devastating burn injuries and fire deaths is a major priority with the State Fire Marshal’s Office.”

By following simple safety rules, you can “**Stay Fire Smart! Don’t Get Burned.**”

- Keep hot foods and liquids away from tables and counter edges so they cannot be pulled or knocked over.
- Have a 3-foot “kid-free” zone around the stove.
- Never hold a child in your arms while preparing hot food or drinking a hot beverage.
- Be careful when using things that get hot such as curling irons, ovens, irons, lamps, and heaters.
- Install tamper-resistant receptacles to prevent a child from sticking an object in the outlet.
- Never leave a child alone in a room with a lit candle, portable heater, lit fireplace or stove, or where a hot appliance might be in use.
- Wear short or close-fitting sleeves when cooking.
- Set your hot water temperature no higher than 120 degrees.
- Install anti-scald valves on shower heads and faucets.

Fire Prevention Week is actively supported by fire departments across the country. For 85 years fire departments have observed Fire Prevention Week, making it the longest running public health and safety observance on record. To learn more about Fire Prevention Week and October as Fire Prevention Month, visit the special Fire Prevention month web page found through the notifications tab of the Mississippi Insurance Department website (www.mid.state.ms.us). For more fire safety information and updates, look for the Mississippi State Fire Marshal on Facebook and follow us on Twitter at twitter.com/msfiresafe.

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