



OFFICE OF THE ILLINOIS STATE FIRE MARSHAL

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James A. Rivera, State Fire Marshal

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Fire Prevention Week 2024 Theme Announced “Smoke alarms: Make them work for you!™”

Smoke alarms reduce the risk of dying in a home fire by more than half (54 percent)

Springfield, Ill- The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) has announced this year’s theme for Fire Prevention Week October 6-12: “Smoke alarms: Make them work for you!™” The goal of this year’s campaign strives to educate everyone about the importance of having working smoke alarms in the home.

“It’s simple, working smoke alarms save lives! Due to synthetic materials used in modern construction, homes burn hotter and faster, while also emitting toxic smoke limiting the time you have to escape to less than 2-3 minutes. The early warning from smoke alarms could save your life,” said **Illinois State Fire Marshal James A. Rivera**. “I encourage all departments across the state to make plans to host outreach events that help to promote fire safety in their communities during this week. Fire Prevention Week might still be a couple months away, but you should always test your smoke/CO alarms monthly and replace any broken or expired alarms in your home.”

During 2023 in Illinois, the “Be Alarmed!” Smoke Alarm Installation Programs participating fire departments found 68% of pre-existing smoke alarms in homes that received new 10-year sealed battery smoke alarms were non-functional or expired. Currently, there are 280 active Illinois fire departments from 61 different counties participating in this program. To learn more about the “Be Alarmed!” program visit www.ifsa.org/alarms.

According to the NFPA, smoke alarms reduce the risk of dying in a home fire by more than half (54 percent). Meanwhile, roughly three out of five fire deaths happen in homes with either no smoke alarms or no working smoke alarms.

In 1925, President Calvin Coolidge proclaimed Fire Prevention Week a national observance, making it the longest-running public health observance in the United States. During Fire Prevention Week, children, adults, and teachers learn how to stay safe in case of a fire. Firefighters and other public safety educators provide lifesaving public education in an effort to drastically decrease casualties caused by fires.

Fire Prevention Week is observed each year during the week of October 9th in commemoration of the Great Chicago Fire, which began on October 8, 1871, and caused devastating damage. This

horrific conflagration killed more than 250 people, left 100,000 homeless, destroyed more than 17,400 structures, and burned more than 2,000 acres of land.

Learn more about the upcoming Fire Prevention Week and other resources to help you plan your activities can be found by visiting www.fpw.org.

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