

Maryland State Fire Marshal

News Release

Martin O'Malley
Governor

William E. Barnard
State Fire Marshal



“It’s Fire Prevention Week. Protect Your Family from Fire”

GOVERNOR O’MALLEY PROCLAIMS FIRE PREVENTION WEEK

OCTOBER 9-15, 2011

PIKESVILLE, MD (October 6, 2011)– Governor O’Malley proclaims October 9-15, 2011 as Fire Prevention Week and urges all citizens of Maryland to join in and support this observance. The Office of the State Fire Marshal is taking an active role in the National Fire Prevention Association’s, **Fire Prevention Week** by supporting local activities and events that will both entertain and educate the public. The Office of the State Fire Marshal hopes to raise awareness of key fire safety issues helping Marylanders to prevent fires and fire injuries, in particular, those that may impact their own home.

“If there is a fire in your home, you may have only minutes to escape. Having working smoke alarms and a well-practiced home escape plan are crucial so that everyone knows exactly what to do if a fire occurs,” says State Fire Marshal William E. Barnard. *“Taking the time to plan for your family’s safety and well-being can make the difference should a fire emergency occur.”*

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) selected the 2011 Fire Prevention Week theme in order to highlight a serious concern for safety. Fires in the home take a great toll on life and property each year. During the five-year-period from 2005-2009, NFPA estimates that U.S. fire departments responded to an average of 373,900 reported home structure fires per year. These fires caused an estimated average of 2,650 civilian deaths, 12,890 civilian injuries, and \$7.1 billion in direct property damage per year. Smoking materials remain the leading cause of home fire deaths, while cooking equipment is the leading cause of home structure fires and home fire injuries.

The theme, “**It’s Fire Prevention Week. Protect Your Family from Fire**” is a safety message urging planning and preparation for fire emergencies. Here are a few tips:

- Develop a fire escape plan that identifies two ways out of each room and designate a family meeting place outside.
- Practice your plan at least twice a year.
- If the smoke alarm sounds: Go to your closest exit, and if there is smoke on your way out, turn and use your second way out. If you must exit through smoke, get low and go under the smoke to your exit.

Did you know there are two types of smoke sensing technologies available in smoke alarms? An ionization smoke alarm responds more quickly to flaming fires, whereas, a photoelectric smoke alarm responds more quickly to smoldering fires. Ionization alarms are more likely to alert during normal cooking than photoelectric alarms. It is recommended to have both types of smoke alarms or dual sensor type alarms in your home.

Smoke alarms should be installed on every level of your home, outside sleeping areas and inside each bedroom. Interconnected smoke alarms are most highly recommended because when one smoke alarm activates, all of them will. A licensed electrician should install hard wired smoke alarm systems. However, new technology exists with the emergence of wirelessly interconnected smoke alarms that can be easily installed by the homeowner.

Test smoke alarms monthly by pressing the test button. Replace batteries at least once a year and replace the entire smoke alarm every ten years.

Smoke alarms are also available for individuals that are deaf or hard of hearing. Visual smoke alarms have a bright strobe light that flashes while sounding an alarm. These units can be enhanced with notification appliances that shake pillows and beds.

Marylanders should consider purchasing a carbon monoxide alarm if they live in a home that has liquid-fueled space heaters, an attached garage, gas appliances, oil heat, wood stove and/or fireplace. Carbon monoxide detectors should be located on every floor of the home.

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(See attached Governor’s Proclamation document)

The State of Maryland



Proclamation

From the Governor of the State of Maryland

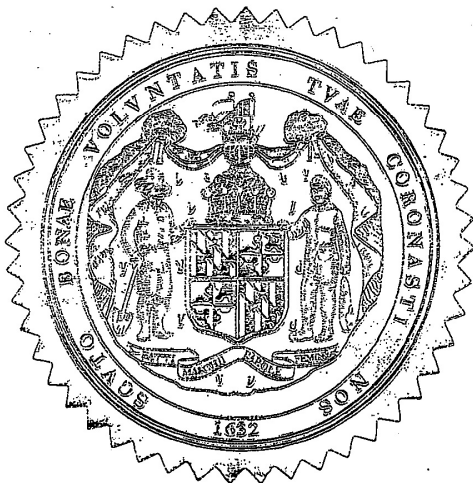
FIRE PREVENTION WEEK

OCTOBER 9 - 15, 2011

- WHEREAS,** Fire is a serious public safety concern in Maryland and across the United States, and in their own home is where people are at the greatest risk from fire; and
- WHEREAS,** Nearly 3,000 American's die each year as a result of home fires; and
- WHEREAS,** About two-thirds of home fire deaths resulted from home fires in which there was no smoke alarm or no working smoke alarm present; and
- WHEREAS,** A working smoke alarm has proven to cut the chance of dying in half; and
- WHEREAS,** Informing our citizens about the importance of smoke alarm installation and maintenance is essential to increase the level of safety from home fires; and
- WHEREAS,** Maryland's Fire Service and Emergency Medical Services are dedicated to reducing the occurrence of home fires and home fire deaths and injuries through promoting the use of residential fire sprinklers; and
- WHEREAS,** The Fire Prevention Week 2011 theme, "It's Fire Prevention Week! Protect Your Family from Fire!" serves as a reminder for all Maryland residents to install and maintain working smoke alarms in their homes to protect their families.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, MARTIN O'MALLEY, GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF MARYLAND, do hereby proclaim October 9 - 15, 2011 as **FIRE PREVENTION WEEK** in Maryland, and do commend this celebration to all of our citizens.

Given Under My Hand and the Great Seal of the State of Maryland,
this 9th day of October
Two Thousand and eleven



Martin O'Malley
Governor

Robert Ehrlich
Lt. Governor

Jose G. McLean
Secretary of State