

Features



Fire Prevention Month

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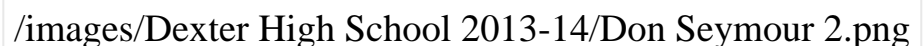
*Submitted by
Dee Loflin, SMT Manager/Writer*

Jefferson City, Missouri - October is Fire Prevention Month and according to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), a home structure fire was reported every 87 seconds in 2009.

Is your family prepared for a fire emergency? October is National Fire Prevention Month and it serves as an excellent time to examine your preparedness. Do you have a home fire escape plan? Have you changed smoke-alarm batteries within the last year? Do you know the main reasons for fires starting in the home? Get more information on Fire Prevention Month and Week at the NFPA's website.

With Fire Prevention Week 2013 last week, **State Fire Marshal Randy Cole** is urging Missourians to learn about and take simple steps to prevent kitchen fires. More fires occur in the kitchen than in any other room of the house. Cooking is the leading cause of home fires and of home fire-related injuries.

"Kitchen fires, especially those

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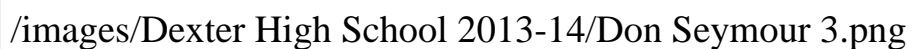
involving grease, can spread quickly and be very difficult to put out," **State Fire Marshal Cole** said. "There are other fire risks in the kitchen, too, including toasters, toaster ovens and overloaded outlets and extension cords. That is why it is essential to know how fires can start in the kitchen, understand the ways they can be prevented and have an action plan for what

to do if a fire starts.”

Among the safety tips that firefighters and safety advocates will be emphasizing are:

- Stay in the kitchen when you are frying, grilling, broiling, or boiling food.
- If you must leave the room, even for a short period of time, turn off the stove.
- When you are simmering, baking, or roasting food, check it regularly, stay in the home, and use a timer to remind you.
- If you have young children, use the stove’s back burners whenever possible. Keep children and pets at least three feet away from the stove.
- When you cook, wear clothing with tight-fitting sleeves.
- Keep potholders, oven mitts, wooden utensils, paper and plastic bags, towels, and anything else that can burn, away from the stovetop.
- Clean up food and grease from burners and stovetops.
- Keep a fire extinguisher near the kitchen exit. Make sure you know how to operate the extinguisher. Fire extinguishers are never a substitute for calling the fire department, even if a fire is small.

Fire Marshal Cole suggests creating a family fire safety plan that includes learning about kitchen fire hazards and how to avoid them, as well as developing a home fire escape plan. Families should regularly practice these plans and explain them to children, revising the plan as the children grow up.



Cole adds that having a working smoke

detector is essential to ensuring your family is alerted in case of a fire and suggests replacing smoke detector batteries at least once a year to help ensure they will work when needed.

The end of Daylight Saving Time, 2 a.m. Sunday, Nov. 3, 2013, when clocks are adjusted to “fall back” an hour, can serve as an easy reminder.

Fire Prevention Week is recognized annually by the **National Fire Protection Association** (NFPA) and fire departments and safety agencies across the country. According to NFPA, cooking is the leading cause of home fires and related injuries. In 2011, there were 370,000 home structure fires resulting in 2,520 civilian deaths across the nation.

For more than 85 years, fire departments have observed Fire Prevention Week, making it the longest running public health and safety observance on record. For more information on “Prevent Kitchen Fires,” visit www.firepreventionweek.org.

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Written by Dee Loflin
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