

October 8, 2007

## **FIRE PREVENTION WEEK OCTOBER 7-13, 2007**

BISMARCK – During National Fire Prevention Week (October 7-13, 2007), State Fire Marshal Ray Lambert wants to focus community attention on fire prevention, safety, and awareness in the home. Fire Prevention Week is observed each year during the week of October 8th, which is the anniversary of the Great Chicago Fire of 1871.

The Fire Marshal's office, a division of the Attorney General's office, joins the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) each year to focus attention on fire safety. This year's theme is "Practice Your Escape Plan."

"Every household should have an escape plan, and should practice the plan regularly so that everyone knows what to do in case of fire. The plan should include a safe place to meet outside. Keep in mind that small children or the elderly may require assistance in safely evacuating the home," said Lambert.

Smoking was the number one cause of fire deaths in North Dakota for 2005 and 2006, accounting for 50% of fire fatalities during that time period. Eleven of the nineteen deaths were directly related to smoking or smoking materials. Cooking fires were the second cause of fire deaths.

"Having a fire prevention plan is just as important as having an escape plan," said Lambert. "By following just a few safety tips and recognizing that smoking and cooking are the major causes of house fires, you can protect your family."

Lambert offered the following safety tips:

1. Never smoke in a sleeping area or in areas where medical oxygen is in use.
2. Don't smoke when consuming drugs or alcohol.
3. Keep matches and lighters away from and out of the reach of children.
4. Never leave the kitchen area while cooking.
5. Before cooking, roll up your sleeves or wear tight-fitting clothing. Keep the range top clear of cooking oil or an accumulation of grease
6. Always turn pot handles inward so children cannot reach the handles and pull pans off the stove
7. Install and properly maintain smoke alarms in each level of the home and outside of each sleeping area. Additional alarms can be placed inside each bedroom.

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