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Department of Fire, EMS, & Emergency Management

MEDIA RELEASE

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FIRE PREVENTION WEEK

Fire prevention week is October 4 -10, 2009. Fire prevention week was established to commemorate the Great Chicago Fire, the tragic 1871 conflagration that killed more than 250 people, left 100,000 homeless, destroyed more than 17,400 structures and burned more than 2,000 acres. The fire began on October 8, but continued into and did most of its damage on October 9, 1871.

This year's theme is "Stay Fire Smart! Don't Get Burned." Once a child touches a hot stove, as the cliché goes—he learns his lesson, stay away from a hot stove. This cliché does not take into account the pain and suffering from burns and burns should not be part of the learning process. That's why the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) and Colonial Heights Fire and EMS urge residents to "Stay Fire Smart! Don't Get Burned." This year's campaign focuses on ways to keep homes fire safe and prevent painful burns. The statistics are staggering. Each year roughly 3,000 people dies because of home fires and burns, and more than 200,000 individuals are seen in the nation's emergency rooms for burn injuries. The most common types of burn

injuries result from fire or flame burns, scalds and contact burns. 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 is a healthy change we can make happen.

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, oven, irons, lamps, 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 showerheads 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. For more information on "Stay Fire Smart! Don't Get Burned." visit www.firepreventionweek.org or call Deputy Fire Marshal J. E. Boisseau at 804-520-9376 or at boisseauj@colonial-heights.com.