

West Virginia State Fire Marshal's Office



Monthly Fire Prevention Planning Guide
2017

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Mission Statement

Work to lower the fire death rate in the state, while being an ambassador for the West Virginia State Fire Marshal's Office.

Our goal in Public Education FY 2017 is to continue building our strong partnerships and implement action plans around the state with agencies and organizations who will help us spread fire prevention initiative and safety.

Through data evaluations we are identifying our high risk geographic areas and population. We are analyzing this information to target the community risk reduction for our best programs and practices.

We utilize our resources like the media, officials and celebrities in the state to promote the importance of smoke alarms and safety in the home.

While working with the local fire departments, the goal is to provide resources to assure that all residential structures have working smoke alarms.

We will begin an After the Fire Canvassing Program focused initially on fire fatality incidents, providing local fire departments with encouragement and resources to conduct door-to-door offering home fire safety surveys. The fire departments will educate and promote what to do in the event of a fire. In particular, promote using escape plans and practicing exit drills and having smoke alarms properly installed.

We will utilize fire integration methods to approximate the area of fire origin and victim location to assist in community risk reduction planning. Canvassing and interviewing friends, family members and neighbors to develop better social demographics on victims where identifiable habits like hoarding and smoking, or mental status and education factor into the way we assess future risks.

This focused approach will be promoted throughout the next 12 months in an effort to support fire prevention in the most comprehensive effort ever in West Virginia. The State Fire Marshal's Office will continue to use data from fire reports, news media articles, investigation reports, and other means to track the fire mortality rate. Maps utilizing GIS technology to analyze social economic conditions and fire mortality data collected over the past 6 years will be studied to further our reach in target areas. The targets are specific – not only locally identified, but developed from census tracks at the street level. Special emphasis will be placed on these areas with individualized programs developed to address local issues.

GOALS: Focused Fire Prevention

The goal for 2017-2018 the Statewide Public Fire Education Program is to focus resources where they matter most. This method of focused fire prevention will specifically target high-risk areas of the state with crucial fire prevention messages. While working with the local fire departments, the goal is to accomplish the following in each of the targeted areas:

- Provide resources to assure that all residential structures have working smoke alarms.
- Provide local fire departments with resources to conduct door-to-door public education programs including offering home fire safety surveys.
- Educate and promote what to do in the event of a fire. In particular, promote using escape plans and practicing exit drills.
- Provide information on how residential fire sprinklers can save your life.

- Promote the public fire education messages that are specific to each community.
- Establish community involvement and awareness about fire safety with local officials.
- Provide outreach to high risk populations within the targeted areas.
- Use local media and other technology to reach high risk targets.

This focused approach will be promoted throughout the next 12 months in an effort to support fire prevention in the most comprehensive effort ever in Tennessee. The SFMO will continue to use data from fire reports, news media articles, death certificates, bomb and arson section reports, insurance reports, and other means to track the fire mortality rate. Maps utilizing GIS technology to analyze social economic conditions and fire mortality data collected over the past 10 plus years will be studied to further our reach in target areas. The targets are specific – not only locally identified, but developed from census tracks at the street level. Special emphasis will be placed on these areas with individualized programs developed to address local issues.

The majority of the public education topics used to support this program are from the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) publication titled, “NFPA Educational Messages Desk Reference.” These topics are introduced into monthly plans from existing state and local sources. The result is a comprehensive public fire education plan or guide for use by state and local officials.

Please utilize the information provided within this guide to promote fire prevention and life safety measures. The participation of local and state resources is critical in reducing the fire mortality rate in Tennessee. Special care, however, must be taken in communicating fire and life safety messages to youth. The following recommendation from the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) should be the basis for fire safety educational programs for children.

Fire in West Virginia

The fire problem varies across the country. This can be a result of regional factors, such as climate, poverty, education and demographics. One of the most useful ways to compare fire fatalities across groups of people is to look at their relative risk of dying in a fire.

The U.S. Fire Administration’s (USFA) recent report on “Relative Risk of Dying in a Fire by State” shows West Virginia has a relative risk of (2.2). Relative risk compares the per capita rate of a particular group to the overall per capita rate. Overall, people living in 25 states and the District of Columbia had a higher risk of dying in a fire in 2013 than the U.S. general population

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