



NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF LOUISIANA STATE FIRE MARSHAL

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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State Fire Marshal's Office Receives Grant for Smoke Alarm Program to Kick Off National Fire Prevention Week

BATON ROUGE- The Louisiana Office of State Fire Marshal (SFM) is proud to announce its selection as a federal grant award recipient allowing the agency to obtain thousands of smoke alarms to increase home fire safety across Louisiana.

FEMA's Grant Programs Directorate's Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 *Fire Prevention and Safety (FP&S) Grant* award, totaling \$180,050, will boost the SFM's smoke alarm inventory to more than 15,000 units for the agency's Operation Save-A-Life program and, for the first time, include an inventory of 100 smoke alarms for the deaf and hard of hearing community.

Operation Save-A-Life partners the SFM with local fire departments and districts to provide FREE smoke alarm installations, at any time of the year, for families in need of assistance accessing the critical emergency-alert equipment.

"We are thrilled to make this announcement as we ask Louisianans to be especially fire aware next week during National Fire Prevention Week," said State Fire Marshal Chief Dan Wallis, "Part of being fire aware is being prepared and the best way to be prepared for a fire emergency in your home is to have a working smoke alarm looking out for you and your loved ones when you go to sleep at night."

The National Fire Protection Agency (NFPA) has deemed October 8-14, 2023 as National Fire Prevention Week across the U.S. This year's theme is "Cooking Safety Starts With *YOU*. Pay Attention to Fire Prevention" which aims to educate everyone about simple but important actions they can take when cooking to keep themselves and those around them safe.

According to NFPA, cooking is the leading cause of home fires and home fire injuries in the United States. Unattended cooking is the leading cause of cooking fires and deaths. Of Louisiana's 78 fire-related deaths in 2022, a handful were believed to have been cooking-related. Statistics from investigations conducted by the SFM that year show smoke alarms were found in only 11 of those homes, however, only three located were confirmed to be in working order at the time of the fire.

"Year after year, cooking remains the leading cause of home fires by far, accounting for half (49%) of all U.S. home fires," said Lorraine Carli, vice president of outreach and advocacy at NFPA. "These numbers tell us that there is still much work to do when it comes to better educating the public about ways to stay safe when cooking."

Over the next few days, the SFM, along with your local fire departments and districts, will be publishing various tips in relation to this year's theme through a variety of graphics, pictures and videos. These will be shared via social media platforms and also through community events and presentations that range from school and senior community visits to fire station open houses, parades and smoke alarm installations.

Some of the main messages include:

- Watch what you heat. Always keep a close eye on what you are cooking. Set a timer to remind you that you are cooking.
- Turn pot handles toward the back of the stove. Always keep a lid nearby when cooking. If a small grease fire starts, slide the lid over the pan and turn off the burner.
- Have a "kid- and pet-free zone" of at least 3 feet (1 meter) around the stove or grill and anywhere else hot food or drink is prepared or carried.

For more information about Fire Prevention Week, visit www.firepreventionweek.org.

To register for a free smoke alarm installation, or to learn more about Operation Save-A-Life, visit lasfm.org or reach out to your local fire department.

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