



NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF LOUISIANA STATE FIRE MARSHAL

Department of Public Safety & Corrections • Public Safety Services
8181 Independence Blvd. • Baton Rouge, LA 70806

www.lasfm.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Ashley Rodrigue
Public Affairs Director

DATE: 3/14/24

PHONE: 225-620-5115
osfm.publicaffairs@la.gov

State Fire Marshal Offers Smoking Safety Reminder Following Franklinton Fatal Fire

WASHINGTON PARISH- State Fire Marshal Chief Bryan J. Adams is continuing to ask the people of Louisiana for fire safety awareness and diligence when it comes to smoking following the state's latest home fire fatality.

Just after 3 a.m. on Tuesday, March 14, Washington Parish Fire District #4 responded to a call for a house fire located in the 31000 block of Highway 425 in Franklinton. Unfortunately, firefighters located the body of the 74-year-old male homeowner in the home's living room.

The extent of the damage has deputies still working to determine where in the home this fire started as well as its cause. However, relatives report that the victim had a history of smoking in the home and while using oxygen equipment.

"Almost half of the lives lost to home fires this year have had some connection to unsafe smoking," said Adams, "You should always smoke outdoors and fully extinguish and discard smoking materials in appropriate containers. These are just two simple prevention steps that can save your life and the lives of those who live with you."

Regarding smoking and medical oxygen, the SFM advises people to never smoke, and never allow anyone to smoke, where medical oxygen is used. Medical oxygen can cause materials to ignite more easily and make fires burn at a faster rate because oxygen is fuel to fire. In addition:

- Candles, matches, wood stoves and even sparking toys can be ignition sources and should not be used in a home where medical oxygen is utilized.
- Keep oxygen cylinders at least five feet from a heat source, open flames, or electrical devices.
- Body oil, hand lotion, and items containing oil and grease can easily ignite. Keep oil and grease away where oxygen is in use.
- Never use aerosol sprays containing combustible materials near the oxygen.

In addition, while deputies did confirm the home had smoke alarms, they were not in working condition at the time of the fire. If you have smoke alarms in your home, ensure they are working by confirming effective batteries with a press of the test button today.

If you need assistance obtaining smoke alarms for your home, Operation Save-A-Life can help. To learn more about Operation Save-A-Life, or to register for a free smoke alarm installation, visit our website at lasfm.org or contact your local fire department to request a free smoke alarm installation.

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