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Department of Commerce

Division of State Fire Marshal

FIRE SAFETY for COLLEGE STUDENTS

College is often the first time many students are responsible for all aspects of their daily living, including their own personal safety. Following proper fire safety procedures can help college students focus on the positive aspects of college life.

Unfortunately, many campus and off-campus fires continue to occur each school year. Across the United States, there have been 140 campus-related fire fatalities since January, 2000. This includes residence hall, off-campus and Greek student housing. According to Campus Firewatch, over 85% of the campus-related fire fatalities have occurred in off-campus housing. Common factors in a number of these fires include missing or disabled smoke alarms, careless disposal of smoking materials and impaired judgment from alcohol consumption.

The Division of State Fire Marshal offers the following fire safety tips for college students:

- Take all fire and smoke alarms seriously.
- Know the dormitory's or residence hall's fire escape plan. Each student should know two ways out – one normal route through hallways and stairways and one alternative route.
- Have smoke detectors installed on each level of the residence and inside each bedroom or sleeping area.
- Check the smoke detectors monthly and change the batteries at least once a semester.
- Never remove the smoke detectors batteries because of cooking smoke or the need for a battery elsewhere, such as a flashlight, game or other electronic device.
- Extinguish all smoking materials, candles and incense thoroughly. Never leave them unattended.
- Clean up immediately after parties and take all trash outside. Designate a non-impaired "event monitor" to be in charge of the clean up.
- Do not overload electrical outlets or use extension cords.

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