



*County of Caroline*  
*Department of Fire-Rescue & Emergency Management*

**PRESS RELEASE**

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**Caroline County Department of Fire and Rescue Urges Caroline County Residents to know “It’s Fire Prevention Week Protect your Family from Fire!”**

*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: October 10, 2011*

Caroline, Virginia— According to the American Red Cross, “fires kill more Americans each year than all natural disasters combined, and affect people from all backgrounds and geographic locations.” Unlike natural disasters, however, most fires can be prevented. A proactive approach to fire safety can reduce the staggering numbers of deaths and injuries caused by fires. That’s why Caroline County Fire and Rescue is teaming up with the NFPA during October 9-15, 2011, to let Caroline County know: **“It’s Fire Prevention Week. Protect your Family from Fire!”** This year’s campaign focuses on preventing the leading causes of home fires cooking, heating and electrical equipment, as well as candles and smoking materials. Additionally, it urges people to protect their homes and families with life-saving technology and planning.

Why is fire safety so important? Here are some startling statistics from NFPA:

- Every 23 seconds, a fire department responds to a fire; every 66 seconds, a fire occurs in a structure; and every 87 seconds, a residential fire strikes.
- A fire claims a civilian life every 175 minutes and results in a civilian injury every 31 minutes.
- 63% of home fire deaths occur in homes with either no smoke alarms or no working smoke alarms.

The following tips will help keep your family safe if there is a fire in your home:

- Install smoke alarms inside each bedroom, outside each sleeping area, and on every level of the home (including the basement).
- Test smoke alarms at least monthly and replace all smoke alarms when they are 10 years old or sooner if they do not respond when tested.
- Make sure everyone in your home knows how to respond if the smoke alarm sounds.
- Pull together everyone in your household and make a plan. Walk through your home and inspect all possible ways out. Households with children should consider drawing a floor plan of your home, marking two ways out of each room, including windows and doors.
- If you are building or remodeling your home, consider installing home fire sprinklers.
- Stay in the kitchen while you are frying, grilling, or broiling food. If you leave the kitchen for even a short period of time, turn off the stove.
- Keep anything that can burn at least three feet away from heating equipment, like the furnace, fireplace, wood stove, or portable space heater.
- Replace or repair damaged or loose electrical cords.
- If you smoke, smoke outside.
- Blow out all candles when you leave the room or go to bed. Avoid the use of candles in the bedroom and other areas where people may fall asleep.

To assist with this fire safety mission, Caroline County Fire Department's will be conducting the following public fire safety events throughout fire prevention week:

- October 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> - "Read with a Firefighter", Bowling Green Library – from 10am to 11am. Fire safety stories for pre-schoolers and tours of the fire trucks.

Caroline Fire Departments will also be presenting fire prevention educational programs to students at the following schools/daycares:

- Wednesday, October 12<sup>th</sup> – Bowling Green Elementary School
- Wednesday, October 12<sup>th</sup> – Allyson Daycare
- Thursday, October 13<sup>th</sup> – Lewis and Clark Elementary School
- Thursday, October 13<sup>th</sup> – Madison Elementary School

Caroline parents are encouraged to discuss the day's program with their children and practice their own home fire escape drills.

To learn more about "It's Fire Prevention Week. Protect your Family from Fire!" visit NFPA's Web site at [www.firepreventionweek.org](http://www.firepreventionweek.org). For more information, contact the Department of Fire-Rescue & Emergency Management at (804) 633-9831.

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