



## NEWS RELEASE

*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*

*Mark A. Hartwig*  
*Fire Chief*

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**CONTACT:** *Penni Overstreet-Murphy*  
*(909) 386-8472 phone, (909) 936-5541 cell*

### **It's Fire Prevention Week. Protect your Family from Fire!**

San Bernardino County Fire Department Encourages Residents to Keep their Homes Safe  
During Fire Prevention Week, October 9-15, 2011

What's the best way to protect your family from fire? Be ahead of the game, of course. With more than 360,000 home fires reported in the United States in 2009, according to the non-profit National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) (there were 269 home fires in San Bernardino County Fire Department's jurisdiction alone with over \$25 million dollars in losses), your best defense is a good offense. That's why San Bernardino County Fire Department is teaming up with NFPA October 9-15, to let County residents 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.

"In 2009, 2,565 people died in home fires. Nearly all of these deaths could have been prevented by taking a few simple precautions like having working smoke alarms and a home fire escape plan, keeping things that can burn away from the stove and always turning off space heaters before going to bed," stated Deputy Fire Marshal Mike Horton. "Fire is a dangerous opponent, but by anticipating the hazards, you are much less likely to be one of the nearly 13,000 people injured in home fires each year."

San Bernardino County Fire Department offers the following tips for protecting your home and family from fire:

- 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. Have a three-foot "kid-free zone" around open fires and space heaters.
- Replace or repair damaged or loose electrical cords.
- If you smoke, do so outside. Use deep, wide ashtrays on a sturdy table.
- Extinguish 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.

"While preventing home fires in San Bernardino County is always our number one priority, it is not always possible," Horton continued. "San Bernardino County's residents need to provide the best protection to keep their homes and families safe in the event of a fire. This can be achieved by developing an escape plan which you practice regularly and equipping homes with life-saving technologies like smoke alarms and home fire sprinklers."

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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.
- Interconnect all smoke alarms in the home so when one sounds, they all sound.
- Test smoke alarms 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, install home fire sprinklers.

The San Bernardino County Fire Department will be hosting activities during Fire Prevention Week to promote “It’s Fire Prevention Week. Protect your Family from Fire!” Make sure to visit our website at [www.sbcfire.org](http://www.sbcfire.org) to see what activities will be occurring in your community.

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