



# FIGHT FIRE WITH FACTS

## CARELESS SMOKING



More than 4,000 Americans die each year in fires and more than 25,000 are injured. Many of them might be alive today if they had only had the information they needed to avoid a disaster. The following life-saving tips could make a big difference to your audience. By incorporating them in your story now, while the moment is still fresh, you could help save a life.

### Did you know?

- Eighty percent of all fire deaths occur in the home.
- Careless smoking is the leading cause of fire deaths!
- Deaths due to fires caused by careless smoking are particularly avoidable.
- Having a working smoke alarm more than doubles one's chances of surviving a fire.

Following these simple fire safety tips can boost survival rates dramatically. Please share them with your readers because knowledge is the best fire protection.

### Careless Smoking Life-Saving Tips

- Never smoke in bed. Replace mattresses made prior to the 1973 Federal Mattress Flammability Standard.
- Don't put ashtrays on the arms of sofas or chairs.
- Use large ashtrays with wide lips. While smaller ashtrays may be more attractive, they are not safe. Cigarettes can roll off the edge, and ashes can easily be blown away.
- Empty ashtrays into the toilet or an airtight metal container. Warm ashes dumped in waste cans can smolder for hours, then ignite.
- Don't leave cigarettes, cigars or pipes unattended.
- Put out all smoking materials before you walk away.
- If you begin to feel drowsy while watching television or reading, extinguish your cigarette or cigar.
- Close a matchbook before striking and hold it away from your body. Set your cigarette lighter on "low" flame to prevent burns.
- If friends or relatives who smoke have visited, be sure to check on the floor and around chair cushions for ashes that may have been dropped accidentally.
- In case of a fire, stay low to the ground, beneath the smoke, and have an escape plan already worked out.
- Install a smoke alarm on every level of your home. Test the batteries every month and change them at least once a year.

For more information on how you can help prevent fire deaths please contact your local fire department on a non-emergency number or the United States Fire Administration at **(800) 238-3358** or [www.usfa.fema.gov](http://www.usfa.fema.gov)