



FIRE PREVENTION MONTH

Fire prevention starts with awareness, preparation and action. Take time to review your family’s safety plan, check your alarms and learn how to prevent fires before they start. A few simple precautions today can save lives tomorrow.

Emergency/Non-Emergency Contacts

Emergency 9-1-1	<i>Chrisman Non-Emergency </i>
<i>Paris Non-Emergency 217-465-</i>	<i>(217) 269-2214 (Police) (217)</i>
<i>6351 (Police) 217-466-5670 (Fire)</i>	<i>269-2014 (Fire)</i>
<i>Marshall Non-Emergency (217)</i>	<i>Kansas Non-Emergency (217)</i>
<i>826-8081 (Police) (217) 826-2341</i>	<i>948-5621 (217) 948-5111 (Fire)</i>
<i>(Fire)</i>	

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(217) 921-3216
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Fire safety extends into the driveway

THE PRAIRIE PRESS TEAM
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As part of Fire Prevention Month, residents are encouraged to take precautions to prevent vehicle fires and know how to respond if a fire breaks out while driving.

Vehicle fires can start for several reasons, including mechanical or electrical failures, fuel leaks, overheated engines and crashes. Regular maintenance and recognizing warning signs can help drivers reduce fire risk.

Drivers should pay attention to unusual smells, smoke, leaking fluids and changes in vehicle performance. The smell of burning rubber or plastic, visible smoke from under the hood or repeated electrical problems can indicate a potential hazard.

If a driver suspects a vehicle is overheating or experiencing a mechanical problem, they should pull over to a safe location as soon as possible, turn off the engine and exit the vehicle.

Routine inspections and maintenance are also important. Checking for damaged wiring, worn hoses, fluid leaks and other mechanical issues can help

identify problems before they become dangerous.

Drivers should never ignore warning lights or keep driving a vehicle showing

as safely as possible, turn off the ignition, get everyone out of the vehicle and move a safe distance away from traffic and the burn-

a burning vehicle. Drivers and passengers should also avoid opening the hood if smoke or flames are coming from the engine com-

tions, don't try to fight a vehicle fire if it puts you at risk. Fires involving fuel, electrical systems or high-voltage batteries can

cle and should always follow posted instructions at gas stations.

Fuel containers should be approved for the specific fuel being transported, secured upright and kept away from heat sources. Drivers should also avoid storing gasoline inside passenger compartments or other enclosed spaces.

For electric and hybrid vehicles, damaged high-voltage batteries can present additional hazards.

Following a crash, drivers should watch for smoke, unusual odors, popping sounds or heat and move away from the vehicle if any of these signs appear.

Keeping a vehicle in good condition, understanding its warning signs and knowing how to respond in an emergency can help protect drivers, passengers and others on the road.

Drivers should keep emergency contact information accessible and consider carrying a roadside emergency kit. Most importantly, anyone who encounters a vehicle fire should prioritize getting to safety and contacting emergency responders rather than attempting to save the vehicle.



signs of serious mechanical failure.

If a vehicle catches fire, prioritize getting away from the danger.

Drivers should pull over

ing vehicle. Once everyone is safely away, call 911 and provide the location and emergency details.

Never attempt to retrieve personal belongings from

partment. Opening it can add oxygen and intensify the fire.

Although a portable fire extinguisher may help in certain small-fire situa-

escalate quickly.

Gasoline and other fuels are highly flammable, so handle them carefully. Drivers should never smoke while fueling a vehi-

FIRE SAFETY SAVES LIVES

Be Prepared. Stay Safe.



ESSENTIAL FIRE SAFETY TIPS

- Keep fire exits clear at all times
- Never block sprinklers or alarms
- Do not overload electrical outlets
- Store flammable materials properly
- Report damaged wiring immediately

IN CASE OF FIRE:

- Stay calm and activate the nearest alarm
- Evacuate the building quickly and safely
- Do not use elevators
- Follow marked escape routes
- Call emergency services once outside

IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY CALL 9-1-1



FIRE PREVENTION MONTH

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Be ready before the flames

Chrisman Fire Chief Mike Marvin shares essential fire prevention tips

BY NOAH JOHNSON
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Officials are encouraging residents to practice fire safety and to never be afraid to call 911 in an emergency as part of Fire Prevention Month.

Chrisman Volunteer Fire Chief Mike Marvin shared vital safety tips to not only prevent fires, but also what to do if one happens.

“The first thing is a working smoke alarm. Secondly, a working CO detector, and thirdly, at least one fire extinguisher in the home,” he said.

“Those would be the top three things.”

Not only should every residence have those three items, but each should also be the correct brand and up to date.

Marvin said all detectors and fire extinguishers should be a reputable brand and Underwriters Laboratories (UL) certified.

Additionally, it’s vital to make sure detectors and fire extinguishers are up to date.

The State of Illinois requires all smoke detectors to have a 10-year battery, but Marvin recommends replacing them sooner than that as an added precaution.

“In general practice, you should probably consider changing out your smoke detectors and CO detectors about every seven or eight years,” Marvin said.

He explained that the sensors in the alarms can progressively go bad through daily wear and tear, whether that be dust or smoke.

“They still work, but maybe not as good as they should,” Marvin said.

After ensuring a home is equipped with the necessary detectors and extinguisher, establishing an escape plan and a meeting place is key.

Meeting at a central location can determine if every-

one who was in the home is safely out.

This also assists firefighters when they arrive on scene.

“When you (firefighters) pull up at a structure fire and the family’s outside, that’s one of the first questions you ask: Is everybody here that’s supposed to be,” Marvin said.

However, it’s not enough to have a plan in place; it’s essential to practice how you and your family would escape.

“An escape plan is only as good as your training,” Marvin said.

“We do the same thing. We’re not going to get any better at fighting fires if we don’t train for them.”

Once safely out of the home, it’s imperative to not reenter the home.

“If you’ve already escaped, going back in is the last thing you ever want to do,” Marvin said.

“The exception to that would be to try to save a family member, but even with that (exception), you could

end up with two victims instead of one.”

When a fire starts, some try to gather personal belongings or personal documents, which can prove to be a dangerous or even fatal situation.

Marvin recommended storing important documents or keepsakes in a fire-proof safe.

He conceded that clearly not all valuables can be stored in a safe. But it can be used to preserve important documents such as a birth certificate, deeds, passports, Social Security cards and other items.

Marvin also spoke about how quickly a fire can grow in area and intensity, saying a fire can double in size every minute.

“A structure fire burns at roughly 1,500 degrees Fahrenheit; nobody’s built to survive that,” he said.

Some fires can be handled by the resident, considering there is a working fire extinguisher in the home.

However, residents should

know their extinguisher’s capabilities, including how large an area it can extinguish.

Even if a resident is confident in their ability to extinguish the fire on their own, Marvin still encourages them to call 911.

Marvin said individuals should never feel bad about calling for emergency ser-

vices, and not calling 911 out of fear of wasting a department’s time could result in a much worse situation.

“If you go into it with that attitude, that’s where you’re going to get hurt,” Marvin said.

He added that his department will call for mutual aid before they arrive on scene, because it’s better to have

the assistance and not need it rather than need it and not have it.

“Even as firemen, when we go to a structure fire, we call for mutual aid; a lot of times, as we’re pulling out of the building, because we don’t know how bad it’s going to be, so you’d rather have help on the way and get there and find out you really don’t need them,” he explained.

He added that if firefighters arrive on scene to a fire that is supposedly out, they are more than willing to inspect the home to ensure it is completely out.

Firefighters use thermal imaging cameras that can determine a fire is still active somewhere hidden, such as the inside of the walls.

“Everybody’s happy to do that,” he said.

Marvin encourages those with any interest in joining their local volunteer fire department to reach out.

“Step forward because departments can use people,” he said.

Marvin is the chief of the Chrisman Fire Department with 41 years of combined experience as an industrial and volunteer firefighter.



PREPARE FOR THE UNEXPECTED PROTECT WHAT MATTERS

Join us this Fire Prevention Month to review a few tips to keep you and your family protected

- ❖ Install smoke alarms on every level of your home, including inside and outside sleeping areas.
- ❖ Test smoke alarms monthly and replace batteries every 6 months.
- ❖ Replace smoke alarms every 10 years or sooner if they fail a test.
- ❖ Keep at least one working fire extinguisher in an accessible location.
- ❖ Clean dryer vents regularly to reduce fire risk.
- ❖ Review your home insurance coverages and limits today with Dimond Bros. Insurance to help ensure you’re protected in the event of a fire.



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These tips are general safety guidelines and not a complete fire prevention plan. For questions about your insurance protection or coverage needs, please consult a licensed insurance professional.

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Stop, Drop and Learn!

Firefighters bring hands-on safety lessons to local schools



Noah Johnson/The Prairie Press

xxx

BY NOAH JOHNSON
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As part of Fire Prevention Month, schools across the county celebrated Fire Prevention Week.

The week, from Oct. 4 to Oct. 10, is an educational program where educators and firefighters teach communities about fire prevention and safety.

Local firefighters visited schools across the county and shared life-saving tips with students and faculty.

“Going into our schools during Fire Prevention Week is one of the most important opportunities we have to help keep our community safe,” Paris Fire Chief Zack Janis said.

Firefighters visited Carolyn Wenz Elementary, Me-

morial Elementary and the Creative Center for kids.

Each school was given fire safety and prevention tips tailored to the appropriate age level.

At the Creative Center, kids participated in a variety of safety lessons and activities on what to do in the event of a fire. Students also got a fire safety coloring book.

At Memorial, firefighters provided students with a fire safety book and taught various safety tips.

Officials emphasized the importance of knowing what to do in the event of a fire, knowing their home address and using a designated meeting spot if the home needs to be evacuated.

The department brought its smokehouse to simulate

a house fire and students learned how to safely avoid the smoke and find a safe exit. The school also practiced a fire drill.

At Carolyn Wenz, students kicked off the day with a full-school fire drill, giving students the opportunity to practice safely exiting the building and adhering to fire safety procedures.

Firefighters visited each third grade classroom, explaining what to do in the event of a fire, designated meeting spots and general fire safety.

Third graders also practiced exiting the smokehouse and ensuring every student was accounted for upon exit.

Fourth and fifth grade students participated in

a combined presentation highlighting fire safety and the importance of being prepared for an emergency.

Janis reiterated the importance of him and his team visiting schools, saying he hopes students never find themselves in an emergency, but if they do, they will be prepared.

“We want children to know what to do if there’s a fire, understand the importance of getting out and staying out, and take those lessons home to their families. It also gives them a chance to get to know our firefighters, so if they ever need us, they see someone they can trust. We hope they never have to use these lessons, but we want them to be prepared if they do,” Janis said.





The first five minutes matter

When a fire breaks out, every second counts. But have you ever stopped to think about just how much can happen in the first five minutes? One of the biggest misconceptions about fires is that they develop slowly. Many people picture a small flame gradually growing into a larger fire, giving them plenty of time to react. Unfortunately, that's not how many modern fires be-



ZACK JANIS
CHIEF'S CORNER

have. Today's homes contain furniture, carpeting, electronics, and other materials that can produce tremendous amounts of heat and toxic smoke when they burn. Under the right conditions, a small fire can grow into a life-threatening situation in just a few minutes. Here's something that may surprise you: A fire can double in size in a very short period of time. Fire growth depends on fuel, oxygen, and conditions inside the building. Smoke is often more dangerous than the flames. Toxic gases, heat, and reduced

visibility can overcome occupants before the fire ever reaches them. Flashover can occur in a matter of minutes. This is when conditions inside a room become so hot that exposed combustible materials ignite nearly simultaneously. At that point, survival inside that room becomes extremely unlikely. Those first few minutes determine a lot. Early detection, a quick escape, and an immediate call to 911 can make the difference between a close call and a tragedy. Now, let's talk about what this means for the Paris Fire Department.

When we're dispatched to a structure fire, we're already behind the clock. The fire may have been burning for several minutes before anyone noticed it, called 911, and dispatch alerted us. Our firefighters must get to the station or apparatus, respond to the scene, evaluate conditions, establish a water supply, stretch hose lines, and begin fire suppression and search operations. All while that fire continues to grow. That's why training, staffing, equipment, and preparation are so important. We don't have the luxury of figuring things out when we

arrive. We train so that our firefighters can make critical decisions quickly and work together efficiently. Here's what I want every resident to remember: Have working smoke alarms on every level of your home, 15 feet from each sleeping area. Have an escape plan and practice it with your family. If there's a fire, get out, stay out, and call 911 immediately. Close doors behind you as you escape if you can do so safely. A closed door can help slow the spread of fire and smoke. Never go back inside a burning building for belongings.

If we visited your kids this week at school, chances are they've already told you about seeing us and shared a little of what they learned! The bottom line: The first five minutes of a fire can change everything. As firefighters, we spend countless hours preparing for those moments. But fire safety starts long before our trucks ever leave the station. Your smoke alarms, your escape plan, and your decision to call 911 immediately are just as important as the work we do when we arrive. We can replace property. We cannot replace people.

HOME COOKING FIRE PREVENTION TIPS

Cooking is the leading cause of **home fires** and fire injuries. **Ranges or cooktops** cause **62%** of home fires.* Learn how to stay safe.

Keep anything that can catch fire away from your **stovetop**

ALWAYS unplug countertop appliances when not in use

Make sure you have, and test, **GFCI receptacles** in your kitchen to prevent **shock and electrocution**

Double check that **everything is off** when you finish

Prevent fires by keeping your oven and stove top **clean of grease and dust**

NEVER leave the kitchen while cooking

NEVER cook while sleepy, drinking alcohol, or taking medication that makes you drowsy

NEVER disable a smoke alarm while cooking

NEVER use a cooking stove to heat your home

*According to the National Fire Protection Association

Please share this free resource to save lives

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Fire Prevention and Safety Grants: Funding provided through DHS/FEMA's Grant Program Directorate Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program

HOME HEATING FIRE PREVENTION TIPS

Heating equipment caused an estimated **56,000 home fires** and caused **470 deaths** between 2009 and 2013.* Learn how to stay safe.

Keep anything that can burn at least **3 feet** from heat sources.

NEVER leave a space heater **unattended**. Turn off when leaving a room or sleeping.

NEVER plug a space heater into an **extension cord**.

NEVER use a cooking stove to heat your home or dry clothes.

Place heaters on level, flat surfaces **ON THE GROUND**.

Have a **qualified service professional** inspect your heating system **annually**.

Install and maintain **carbon monoxide alarms**.

Never use a space heater or any appliance with a **damaged cord**.

*According to the National Fire Protection Association

Please share this free resource to save lives

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FIRE SAFETY SAVES LIVES

October is FIRE PREVENTION MONTH

City of Paris Illinois

MAYOR CRAIG SMITH, CITY COUNCIL & STAFF
206 S. CENTRAL, PARIS, IL

OCTOBER IS FIRE PREVENTION MONTH

Watch over the flickering candles.

Refrain from overloading electrical outlets.

Ensure that flammable items are stored out of children's reach.

Always ensure to inspect for gas leaks.

Establish a fire escape plan.

122 E Steidl Rd, Paris, IL • (217) 465-5614
1ST SERVICE: 8 a.m. in the Auditorium
2ND SERVICE: 10:30am in the Family Life Center

Preventing fires with space heaters and generators

THE PRAIRIE PRESS TEAM
info@prairiepress.net

As temperatures drop and residents turn to supplemental heating and backup power, fire safety officials are reminding the public to take precautions when using space heaters and portable generators. While both can provide comfort and convenience during colder weather and power outages, improper use can lead to fires, burns and carbon monoxide poisoning.

SPACE HEATER SAFETY

Space heaters can help warm chilly rooms, but they also pose a fire risk when placed too close to combustible materials or left unattended.

The National Fire Protection Association recommends keeping anything that can burn at least 3 feet away from heating equipment. This includes furniture, curtains, bedding, clothing, paper and other household items.

Residents should place space heaters on a solid, level surface where they are unlikely to be knocked over. Heaters should never be placed on furniture, near doorways or in areas where children and pets could accidentally tip them over.

Plug electric space heat-

ers directly into a wall outlet rather than an extension cord or power strip, which can overheat and create a fire hazard. Residents should inspect cords and plugs for damage before use and stop using a heater if it shows signs of electrical problems.

Choose heaters with automatic shutoff features that turn off if they tip over or overheat. Turn off space heaters when leaving a room or going to bed, and never use them to dry clothing or other materials.

Fuel-burning heaters require additional precautions. Never use outdoor heating equipment, including patio heaters or charcoal-burning devices, inside a home, garage or other enclosed space. Fuel-burning appliances can produce carbon monoxide, an odorless, colorless gas that can be deadly.

GENERATOR SAFETY

Portable generators can restore power to essential appliances during an outage, but you must operate them outdoors and away from occupied buildings.

Generators produce carbon monoxide, which can accumulate quickly in enclosed or partially enclosed spaces. Never operate a generator inside a home,

basement, garage, shed or other enclosed area, even if doors or windows are open.

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission recommends placing portable generators at least 20 feet away from the house, with the exhaust directed away from the building. Keep generators away from windows, doors and vents where exhaust could enter. Always follow the manufacturer's instructions and maintain the recommended clearance.

Never operate a generator in wet conditions unless it is protected by a properly designed, well-ventilated canopy or enclosure intended for that purpose. Keep the generator dry, operate it on a dry surface and avoid touching it with wet hands.

Also allow generators to cool before refueling. Gasoline and other fuels are highly flammable, and spilling fuel onto a hot engine can cause a fire. Store fuel in approved containers away from living spaces and ignition sources.

Residents should never plug a portable generator directly into a wall outlet to power a home. This practice, known as backfeeding, can send electricity into utility lines and endanger utility workers and neigh-



bors. A qualified electrician can install a properly rated transfer switch to safely connect a generator to household wiring.

CARBON MONOXIDE

Carbon monoxide poisoning can cause headache, dizziness, weakness, nausea, vomiting, chest pain and confusion. Severe exposure can lead to unconsciousness or death.

Because the gas cannot be seen or smelled, working carbon monoxide alarms are essential. Install alarms on every level of the home and outside sleeping areas, and test them regularly

according to the manufacturer's instructions. Install smoke alarms on every level and inside and outside sleeping areas.

If a carbon monoxide alarm sounds or occupants experience symptoms that could indicate exposure, everyone should leave the building immediately and get to fresh air. Call 911 from outside and do not reenter until emergency responders say it is safe.

PREPARE

Fire safety begins before temperatures fall or severe weather causes a power outage. Residents should

inspect heating equipment, review manufacturer instructions, test smoke and carbon monoxide alarms, and ensure everyone in the household knows how to exit the home in an emergency.

Families should also develop and practice a home fire escape plan with two ways out of every room when possible and a designated outdoor meeting place.

Taking a few simple precautions can help residents stay warm, maintain essential power and protect their families throughout the colder months.

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