



# Minnesota Fire Safety Educator

A Resource for Fire Safety Educators  
From the Minnesota State Fire Marshal Division

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## NFPA's "Fire Loss in the United States"

The NFPA has recently released its annual "Fire Loss in the United States" report for 2015.

The key findings of "Fire Loss in the United States During 2015" showed that:

- Over the last 15 years, the total number of fires reported by local municipal fire departments continues to be on a downward trend for a decrease of 21 percent. Over this same period, however, the number of structure fires has remained relatively constant.
- Fires are still fatal. Home fires account for 78 percent of all fire deaths.
- In communities with populations of less than 5,000, the frequency of fires per thousand population is higher and the rate of civilian fire deaths is significantly worse than in larger communities.
- In 2015, 64 percent of fire department responses were medical aid (ambulance, EMS, rescue) responses.

The full report, along with fact sheets, can be found on the [NFPA website](#).

## Fires in the United States



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# UL “Close Your Door”

Underwriters Laboratory (UL) has launched a new campaign called “[Close Your Door.](#)” It also speaks of fire growth being faster and the need for smoke alarms and escape planning. It looks like it was mostly developed for children but it has some adult resources and videos too. People can log on and pledge to keep their bedroom door closed. There are also downloadable safety resources.



## *Messages for closing the door*

In the fire service it is common knowledge how fast fire spreads and that a simple action of closing a door can slow that spread and increase survivability in a room. UL’s Firefighter Safety Research Institute found that simply closing the bedroom door could have a lifesaving impact. A room with an open door showed temperatures over 1,000 degrees Fahrenheit, while a room with a closed door has temperatures only 100 degrees Fahrenheit.

With this information, a committee of SFMD employees and fire prevention educators worked to create messages for the MSFCA Messaging Guide. Under the topic of Escape Planning the messages are:

Maintain two ways out of each room.

Sleep with doors closed.

Open the door slowly and look for smoke:

If there is no smoke, close the door behind you as you exit the room and make your way outside.

If there is smoke, close the door and turn on the light. If you can do so safely, go out the window. If you are not able to get out the window, yell or signal for help.

Go to your meeting place outside in front of the home.

Call 911 from outside the house – use a cell phone or neighbor’s phone.

Get out and stay out of the house.

Practice your plan with everyone in your home at least once a year.

Additional tips: Feeling door before opening is no longer a recommendation.

A closed door will slow the spread of smoke, heat and fire.

“Tot Finder” stickers are not recommended.

Earlier this year, the NFPA Educational Messages Advisory Committee also updated its Educational Messages Desk Reference. The committee modified its messaging around sleeping with the door closed in the 2016 edition. The updated messaging states: “A closed door may slow the spread of smoke, heat and fire. Install smoke alarms in every sleeping room and outside each separate sleeping area. For the best protection, make sure all smoke alarms are interconnected. When one smoke alarm sounds, they all sound.” The new research shows the spread of fire is faster today as a result of the way newer homes are built and the contents of the homes. This research led to a reexamination of safety messaging around sleeping with the doors closed.

# ***National Fire Academy***

The application period for the second semester of National Fire Academy resident classes opened October 15 and closes December 15. The second semester includes those classes scheduled from April 1 – September 30, 2017.

All information about courses, applications and suggestions for successful completion of the application can be found at the [FEMA website](#).

Completed applications for resident courses must be sent to the following address:

Office of Admissions, Building I, Room 216  
National Emergency Training Center  
16825 South Seton Avenue  
Emmitsburg, MD 21727-8998  
Applications may also be faxed to (301) 447-1441.

For more information, please call the National Fire Academy Admissions Office at 800-238-3358, ext. 1035 or 301-447-1035.

If you are looking to attend a National Fire Academy class here in Minnesota visit the [SFMD website](#) and click on “training.” You will find a variety of courses offered this winter and spring across the state.

## ***Working smoke alarms: “Monique’s Story”***

Monique and her family had just returned from a vacation at Disneyland. Her dad was sleeping downstairs while her daughters and she were sleeping upstairs. Because of working smoke alarms installed three years earlier by the Philadelphia Fire Department, a family is able to tell their story of escaping from a fire in a new video available from the Vision 20/20 project.

Monique and Darnell are sharing their dramatic story in the video, “[Monique’s Story](#),” and along with their accounts, the viewer can hear the event unfold through the 911 call. This free video is available for fire departments to use in promoting the importance of working smoke alarms and can be streamed or embedded on your website.

In addition to “Monique’s Story,” the [Vision 20/20 website](#) contains a number of free resources to help fire departments with their community risk-reduction efforts, including a Fire Safety Materials Generator, Advocacy Toolkit, online Guide to Home Safety Visits, videos, reports and more.



# ***Campus Firewatch monthly theme***

November's monthly theme is Cooking Fire Safety, where you can find links to information and resources from Campus Firewatch, NFPA, USFA and the Michael H. Minger Foundation. This is an opportunity to send out new information and reinforce the importance of students being aware of their role in fire safety.

Upcoming monthly themes are:

- December - Heating
- January - Electrical and What to Look for in Off-Campus Housing
- February - Candles
- March - Smoking
- April - Off-Campus
- May - Two Ways Out

You can find more information and links to resources on college fire safety at Campus Firewatch, and be sure to follow them on Twitter @campusfirewatch, Facebook and YouTube. You can also sign up for periodic updates or subscribe to their newsletter.

## ***Firefighting's Weird History and Fascinating Future***

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) has put together an educational video for children called "Firefighting's Weird History and Fascinating Future". It includes such fascinating tidbits as the fact that fire fighters used their beards as an air filtration device and that fire companies used to compete for the right to fight a fire. This new video on Sparky School House is downloadable and standards-aligned for grades 2 to 5.

The video and lesson plan can be found at [sparkyschoolhouse.org](http://sparkyschoolhouse.org).

## ***Public education meeting***

Coming up is also the November Midwest Regional YFPI and Public Education meeting in November in Brooklyn Park. Please let Kathi Osmonson know if you will be attending. Steve Coover will be delivering his "Teaching the Teacher" presentation.

November 18, 2016  
Brooklyn Center Fire Department  
10am—4 pm

MN and Midwest Youth Fire Intervention meeting. Representatives from our neighboring states will be in attendance with educational sessions to share their YFPI and Public Education strategies.