

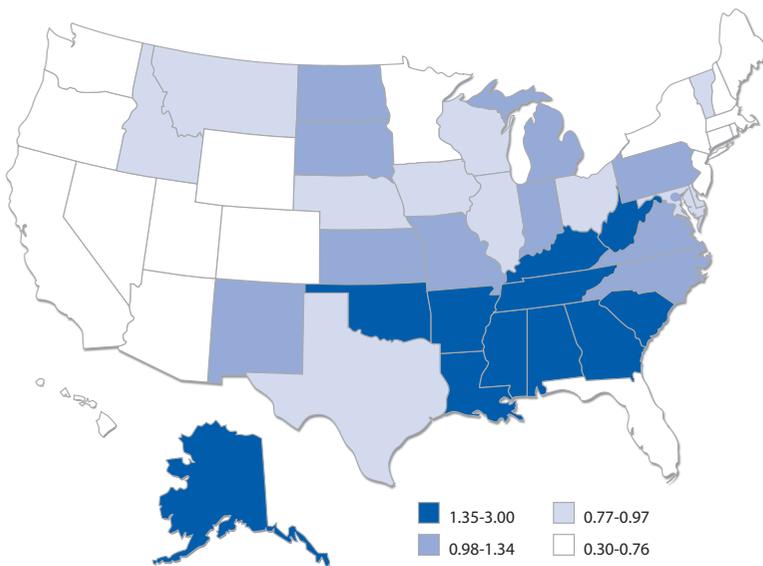
# FACTS preventing residential fire injuries

## THE REALITY

- > In the United States in 2007, on average, someone died every 153 minutes and someone was injured every 30 minutes from a residential fire.
- > Fires and burns are the sixth most common cause of unintentional injury death in the United States and the third leading cause of fatal home injury.
- > Residential fire-related death rates are highest for people 60 years and older and children 4 years and younger.
- > In 2007, fire departments responded to 414,000 home structure fires in the United States. These fires caused 13,600 injuries and 2,865 deaths.



### AGE-ADJUSTED UNINTENTIONAL RESIDENTIAL FIRE-RELATED INJURY DEATH RATES, UNITED STATES (2002-2006)



Deaths per 100,000 population, by quartiles.  
Data Source: National Vital Statistics System.

## COSTS

In 2007, fires in residential properties accounted for \$6 billion in directly attributed property damage.

Fire and burn injuries cost \$7.5 billion each year. Of these costs:

- Non-hospitalized fire and burn injuries cost \$3.3 billion.
- Fatal fire and burn injuries cost \$3.1 billion.
- Hospitalization costs total \$1.1 billion.

## FIRES IN THE HOME

- > Almost two-thirds (65%) of reported home fire deaths resulted from fires in homes with no smoke alarms or no working smoke alarms.
- > Fire-related injuries occur most often in the kitchen, and cooking is the leading cause of home structure fires and home fire injuries.
- > Smoking is a leading cause of home fire deaths.

## FACT FACT

Only 23% of households have actually developed and practiced a home fire escape plan to ensure they could escape quickly and safely.



# preventing residential fire injuries

# FACTS

## PROGRAMS IN ACTION

Since 1998, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has funded smoke alarm installation and fire safety education programs in high-risk communities. CDC currently funds 17 grantees, including 13 state health departments, 3 fire departments, and 1 children's hospital. As of March 2009, nearly 2,420 lives have been potentially saved and over 413,000 smoke alarms have been installed.

- > Since 1998, the CDC Injury Center has funded the Smoke Alarm Installation and Fire Safety Education (SAIFE) program to provide smoke alarm installation and fire safety education programs in high-risk communities.
- > In Arkansas, a man had a smoke alarm installed in his home as part of a free smoke alarm installation program. One night, the smoke alarm sounded, alerting him to escape the home with his wife and child. Motivated by this personal experience, the man became a volunteer firefighter and helped install more smoke alarms than any other firefighter in his department.
- > Through the program, *Get Alarmed, North Carolina!*, fire agencies provide fire safety education and install smoke alarms in the homes of low-income North Carolina families at greatest risk of fire injury. High-risk families often have members that are disabled, 65 years and older, or small children. Now entering its eighth year, *Get Alarmed, North Carolina!* has enrolled 8,662 homes, installed 14,719 smoke alarms, and potentially saved 96 lives.

### WHAT CAN YOU DO?

To reduce the risk of having a residential fire you can:

- > Install smoke alarms in every bedroom, outside each separate sleeping area, and on every level of the home.
- > Devise a family fire escape plan and practice it every six months. In the plan, describe at least two different ways each family member can escape every room, and designate a safe place in front of the home for family members to meet after escaping a fire.
- > Keep cooking areas free of flammable objects (such as pot holders and towels).



## RESEARCH AND PROMISING PRACTICES

- > CDC is conducting a three-year evaluation of the SAIFE program to assess its ability to deliver fire safety information and prepare at-risk households for fire emergencies through the installation and maintenance of smoke alarms. Expected to be completed in September 2010, CDC will use the evaluation results to report findings about changes in fire safety knowledge and behaviors as a result of household participation in the program.
- > CDC is working with partners to develop a curriculum and tool kit designed for use in fire safety trailers. The curriculum and toolkit, which will be based on evidence and best practices, will benefit fire departments interested in implementing more effective fire prevention programs.

## FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES

Smoke alarm installation programs are saving lives across the United States. While much has been done, residential fires remain a significant public health concern. There are opportunities to:

- > Improve our understanding of the causes, appropriate responses, and consequences of fires.
- > Support the implementation and evaluation of effective community-based programs, with a specific emphasis on outreach to high-risk populations and geographic regions
- > Partner with organizations to distribute fire prevention education materials and install smoke alarms.
- > Increase resources available for programs and research that will reduce fire-related injuries and deaths.



**CONTACT CDC**  
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**FOR MORE INFORMATION AND DATA SOURCES**  
[www.cdc.gov/injury](http://www.cdc.gov/injury)



Developed by the State and Territorial Injury Prevention Directors Association (STIPDA)  
[www.stipda.org](http://www.stipda.org)