

Memorandum



DATE: April 11, 2014

TO: Honorable Members of the Public Safety Committee:
Sheffie Kadane (Chair), Adam Medrano (Vice Chair), Dwaine Caraway, Jennifer S. Gates,
Sandy Greyson, Scott Griggs

SUBJECT: **Fire Safety Education: Vital to Public Safety**

Attached is briefing material on the "Fire Safety Education: Vital to Public Safety" to be presented to the Members of the Public Safety Committee on Monday, April 14, 2014.

Please let me know if you need additional information.



Charles M. Cato
Interim Assistant City Manager

Attachment

cc: Honorable Mayor and Members of the Dallas City Council
A.C. Gonzalez, City Manager
Rosa A. Rios, City Secretary
Warren M. S. Ernst, City Attorney
Craig D. Kinton, City Auditor
Daniel F. Solis, Administrative Judge
Ryan S. Evans, Interim First Assistant Manager
Jill A. Jordan, P. E., Assistant City Manager
Forest E. Turner, Assistant City Manager
Joey Zapata, Assistant City Manager
Theresa O'Donnell, Interim Assistant City Manager
Jeanne Chipperfield, Chief Financial Officer
Shawn Williams, Interim Public Information Officer
Elsa Cantu, Assistant to the City Manager – Mayor and Council

Fire Safety Education: Vital to Public Safety



Public Safety Committee
April 14, 2014



The need for Fire Safety Education

“Public education about fire has been cited by many Commission witnesses and others as the single activity with the greatest potential for reducing losses.”

-America Burning 1973

History teaches the importance of Fire Safety Education

1871: The Great Chicago Fire:

- Killed more than 250 people
- Left 100,000 homeless
- Destroyed more than 17,400 structures
- Burned more than 2,000 acres



1911: Triangle Shirtwaist Factory New York City, New York



Fire Prevention Division was added to FDNY to make sure establishments complied with new laws such as not locking doors during working hours and installing sprinklers



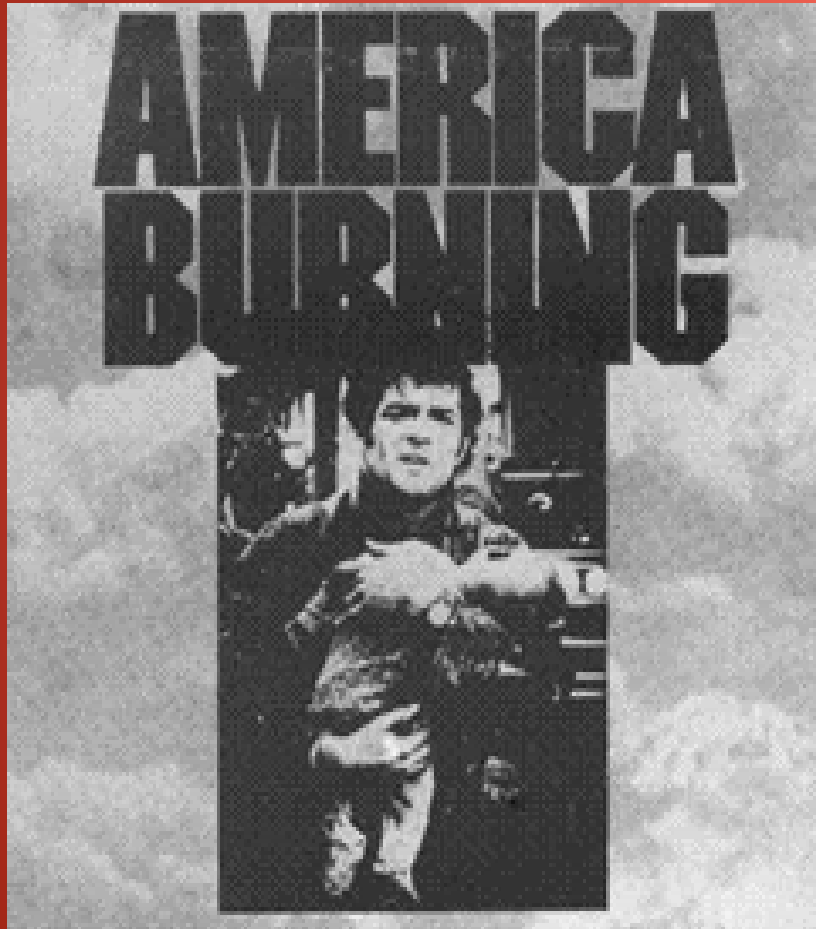
1958: Our Lady of the Angels Catholic School - Chicago, Illinois



Created reform in school safety including mandatory fire drills and fire alarms wired directly to stations (an early form of fire alarm monitoring)

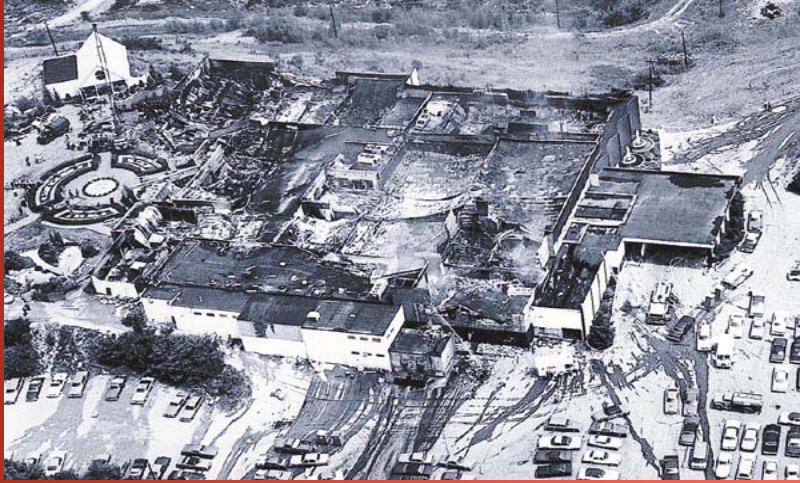


Fire Safety Education comes to the forefront



- In 1973, “America Burning” is published and identifies the need for public education as part of an overall prevention strategy
- The scope of the American fire problem and possible solutions are provided

1977: Beverly Hills Supper Club Southgate, Kentucky



New state laws enacted including emergency lighting in public venues, banning of aluminum wiring and required non-toxic fabric coverings for seats and floors



2003: Station Nightclub Fire West Warwick, Rhode Island



- All public facilities over a certain capacity were required to install sprinklers
- Pyrotechnic display regulations were more strictly enforced



Post 9-11 brings heightened fire and life safety awareness

- The events of September 11th 2001 created an urgency for fire and life safety education
- High-rise buildings, health care facilities, schools and commercial businesses became more proactive with their fire safety plans
- The importance of having a plan created a need for fire educators to design more programs and reach as many citizens as possible



Current Statistics

- In 2012, 1,375,000 fires reported in the United States. These fires caused 2,855 civilian deaths, 16,500 civilian injuries, and \$12.4 billion in property damage
- On average, seven people die in U.S. home fires per day
- Cooking is the leading cause of home fires and home fire injuries, followed by heating equipment
- Smoking is a leading cause of civilian home fire deaths
- **ALL** of these causes are preventable

Dallas Fire-Rescue's Education Team

- Dallas Fire-Rescue's Education Team strives to reach as many groups as possible with a wide range of programs to meet citizen's needs, requests and concerns
- Dallas Fire-Rescue Education programs are a free service



Schools



- Because they are already in a learning environment, children adapt well to fire and life safety lessons at an early age
- Pre-school and elementary school children are taught the basics while pre-teen and teenagers are encouraged to make good grades and smart choices if they choose to join the fire service in the future



Home Fire Safety Drills



- Children under age 5 are almost one-and-a-half times as likely to die in a home fire as the general public
- Home fire safety drills are taught and highly encouraged in DFR's education programs offered to the public
- Designing and practicing a home fire safety drill has been a major theme in *Fire Prevention Week* and *National Night Out*

Working with the Community



- Booths at community events provide our Education Team the ability to reach large and diverse groups such as seniors, children and families
- A uniformed officer staffs the booth to provide information and answer questions
- Literature and safety giveaways are provided for citizens

Training Commercial Businesses in Work Place Safety

- Fire drills are conducted in high-rise buildings
- Fire extinguisher training
- High-rise fire warden training keeps a plan in place



Fire Safety Lectures



- The fire safety lecture can be adapted to fit specific groups
- From senior safety to children to neighborhood concerns, we are able to address specific requests and meet the needs of that group

Smoke Alarms

- Smoke alarms are available to the home owners of Dallas free of charge
- Our educators continue to inform citizens of this service during all programs




Educating the community via annual events throughout the City of Dallas



Providing current safety tips and information with our quarterly newsletter

- Dallas Fire-Rescue provides a free quarterly newsletter in English and Spanish
- Smoke Signals is mailed electronically in a PDF format for easy downloading, printing and distribution
- Provides timely and seasonal fire and life safety tips and news suitable for families, communities and commercial businesses



The newsletter cover features the Dallas Fire-Rescue logo on the left, the title "Smoke Signals A Life Safety Newsletter" in the center, and the City of Dallas logo on the right. The issue is identified as "Volume 4, Issue 1 Spring 2012".

Gasoline Safety

DANGER GASOLINE

- Keep gasoline out of children's sight and reach.
- Do not smoke when handling gasoline.
- Store gasoline outside the home in tightly closed metal or plastic containers approved by an independent testing laboratory or local state fire authorities. **Never** store gasoline in glass containers or non-reusable containers such as milk jugs.
- Store only enough gasoline necessary to power equipment and let machinery cool before refueling it.
- Never use gasoline inside the home or as a cleaning agent.

What is Causing Fire in our Homes?

Electrical:

Still the leading cause of residential fires in Dallas. Remember not to use extension cords for permanent wiring and avoid overloading power strips and electrical plugs. Do not run electrical cords across doorways or under carpets. Many older homes are not properly wired for today's modern appliances, so remember to be cautious in your use of electricity. You may consider hiring a licensed electrician to evaluate your home's electrical system.

Improperly Discarded Smoking Materials:

Discard cigarettes, cigars and pipes safely and completely. Never drop smoking materials in a trash can or out the car window. Make sure your smoking materials are extinguished by running them under water until they are cool to the touch. If you smoke, it is always best to smoke outside.

Combustibles too close to heat source:

While spring is officially here, the weather can still get chilly. Remember to use space heaters carefully and to give them space. Keep a 3 foot clearance of combustibles from any heat source in the house and never use your oven to heat your home.

Equipment Malfunction:

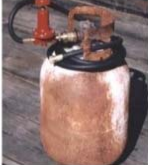

Washers, dryers, ovens, refrigerators and microwaves are common household appliances that can be a fire hazard when operating improperly. If you notice an appliance malfunctioning, discontinue using it until you have had it inspected by a professional repairman or replaced. You know your home best. Pay attention to the things in it.

Propane Gas Safety

- Handle any propane-powered equipment cautiously and always follow the manufacturer's instructions. Cylinder tanks for equipment such as stoves and ovens must be located outside of the home.
- Never store or use propane gas cylinders larger than one pound inside the home.
- Never operate a propane-powered gas grill inside the home.
- Carefully follow the manufacturer's instructions when lighting a pilot.
- If you smell a strong odor of gas, leave the area immediately and call the fire department from outside the home.
- Have propane gas equipment inspected periodically by a professional for possible leaks or malfunctioning parts.

Does your home have a working smoke alarm?

If your home does not have a working smoke alarm, please call 3-1-1. Dallas Fire-Rescue will be glad to install a free smoke alarm for you!



The Dallas Fire-Rescue Education Team is easily accessible

- Education recorded line: Call 214-670-4633
- Programs are arranged to suit audience size, age and nature of event



Email: dfdeducation@dallascityhall.com

Questions?

