

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 20, 2009

Contact: Bill Harrison

804-780-2256 (O)

804-396-0162. (cell)

RED CROSS URGES SIMPLE HOUSE FIRE TIPS THAT CAN SAVE
LIVES

House Fires Can Happen to Anyone

“Every three hours in the United States a home fire claims a life and every thirty minutes someone is injured in a home fire,” shared Reggie Gordon, CEO of the American Red Cross, Greater Richmond Chapter.

Injuries related to fires and burns costs \$1.3 billion in 2000 and in 2006 residential fires cost nearly \$7 billion in property damages. The sentimental value of lost personal items and keepsakes cannot be estimated.

“Loosing one’s home is always devastating,” continued Gordon, “And it can be especially difficult for the elderly who may have lived in a home for many years or for children who cannot comprehend the damage.”

There are measures that businesses, schools and families can put into place that arm people with lifesaving skills in the event of a fire or other emergency.

American Red Cross recommendations:

Install smoke alarms

Install an alarm on every floor of the home, even in the basement and outside every sleeping area. Test the alarms monthly. Change the batteries at least twice a year.

Teach children what the smoke alarm sounds like and what to do if they hear- get out and crawl under the smoke.

Having a smoke alarm cuts the risk of dying in a home fire in half. More than three out of five fire deaths occur in homes with no smoke alarms or with nonworking alarms.

more

American Red Cross
Page 2 of 2

Get out of the burning house

In a fire get out and stay out. Don't pause to get belongings.

Teach children not to hide, but to get out immediately.

Escape first, then call for help.

Never go back into a burning house for any reason. Going back can be deadly. The heat can scorch your lungs and melt your skin. Breathing even small amounts of smoke can make you confused or pass out.

Have an escape route

Plan and practice escape routes. Have a location that all family members will meet after leaving the building.

The American Red Cross will conduct free fire safety seminars for communities of faith, civic organizations or schools. Contact the chapter through the web site www.greaterrichmond.redcross.org or by calling 804-780-2250.

END