



# Implementing a Campus Fire Safety Program

United Educators Telephone Roundtable  
Reference Materials

Thursday, March 15, 2007  
1:00 p.m. Eastern Time

Presented by

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# 1. Speaker Biographies

**Ed Comeau** is the publisher of *Campus Firewatch*, an electronic newsletter focusing on the complex issues of campus fire safety. He recently retired as the director of the nonprofit Center for Campus Fire Safety ([www.campusfire.org](http://www.campusfire.org)), which he also helped to found. Comeau developed the U.S. Fire Administration's website devoted to campus fire safety and has testified at government hearings on legislation related to campus fire safety. He has organized and managed each of the Campus Fire Forums, which have become a key gathering of campus fire safety professionals since their inception in 1999.

Comeau is the former chief fire investigator for the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) and has investigated incidents around the globe, including the English Channel Tunnel fire, the Kobe earthquake, the Düsseldorf Airport terminal fire, the Gothenburg disco fire, and the Oklahoma City bombing. Prior to joining the NFPA, he was a fire protection engineer for the Phoenix Fire Department. Comeau was a firefighter with the Amherst Fire Department while obtaining his bachelor's degree in civil engineering from the University of Massachusetts.

**Edie Curry** is the fire chief of the University of Alaska Fairbanks, where she oversees a 42-person staff. She joined the University of Alaska Fairbanks Fire Department in 1991, serving as both the assistant chief and the deputy chief prior to her appointment as fire chief. Before coming to the university, Curry was the first female hired as a deputy state fire marshal by the State of Alaska, Department of Public Safety.

Curry also specializes in arson investigation, hazardous materials, and emergency response. She has served as the team leader for one of the two State Regional Level A Hazmat Response teams. She has also been a member of Alaska's State Emergency Response Commission and was the principle investigator for the University of Alaska Fairbanks, when the Federal Emergency Management Association chose the university as one of five pilot universities for its Disaster Resistant University Project.

**Alyssa Keehan** is a risk analyst who focuses on premises liability issues involving contracting, facilities, residence hall safety, off-campus housing, and athletics. Keehan previously worked as a general liability claims attorney at United Educators, where she handled hundreds of claims against colleges and universities. Prior to joining United Educators, she was the manager of business and legal issues for the National Association of Professional Insurance Agents. She also worked in legal positions at the Chicago Board of Education and the Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education. Keehan earned her B.A. in politics from Princeton University and J.D. from Loyola University of Chicago.

## 2. Roundtable Agenda

### 2.1 Introduction to the Three Es—Education, Engineering, and Enforcement

### 2.2 Educating Relevant Groups on Campus About Fire Safety

1. Identifying the groups on campus who need fire safety education
2. Strategies for educating the groups identified
3. Critical fire safety issues to cover with the identified groups

### 2.3 Engineering for a Fire Safe Campus

1. Important fire safety engineering strategies
2. Retrofitting buildings for fire safety
3. Making sure new campus construction is engineered for fire safety

### 2.4 Enforcing Fire Safety on Campus

1. Key enforcement strategies for students, faculty, and staff
2. Suggestions for handling enforcement problems relating to false alarms, arson, and special events

## 3. Reference Materials

### 3.1 Education and Training Tools

#### **Lesson Plans—Living With Fire**

The Center for Campus Fire Safety

[www.campusfire.org/resources/fire\\_academy.html](http://www.campusfire.org/resources/fire_academy.html)

This page contains links to a series of lesson plans to educate students and other individuals on a college campus about aspects of fire safety. Lesson plans address the following topics: evacuation, a fire behavior overview for the college student, fire extinguishers in the college environment, off-campus Greek, off-campus residential, on-campus dorm. Each lesson plan contains instructor notes, teaching points, learning objectives, recommended materials and visual aids, and Internet resources. These lesson plans provide a great starting point for those seeking to create an education plan on fire safety.

#### **Tools and Resources**

The Center for Campus Fire Safety

[www.campusfire.org/resources/index.html](http://www.campusfire.org/resources/index.html)

This page contains links to several helpful tools and resources for educating the campus community about fire safety. Links to the following resources are contained on the site: resident assistant training, how to install sprinklers in Greek housing, fire safety in art class, and fire safety in lab class.

#### **A Guide to Building a Student Room Mockup for a Demonstration Burn**

*Campus Firewatch*

<http://campus-firewatch.com/resources.html>

An effective and powerful way to educate students about the dangers of fire is through a demonstration burn of a mockup of a student's room. Some campuses have been reluctant to perform the burn because the project may seem too complex. This is not the case, and this guide proves it. Step-by-step guidance is given on creating a mockup student room without significant time and expense. At the same time, because the exercise involves live fire, the guide also examines all of the safety aspects including the involvement of the fire department throughout the exercise.

#### **Fire Safe Student Housing: A Guide for Campus Housing Administrators**

U.S. Department of Fire Administration

[www.usfa.dhs.gov/downloads/pdf/publications/9-1624.pdf](http://www.usfa.dhs.gov/downloads/pdf/publications/9-1624.pdf)

This guide addresses the elements necessary for fire safe student housing, including prevention, occupant awareness and training, detection, and suppression. The guide also identifies additional resources to help with developing a comprehensive program for fire safe student housing.

#### **Answer These 20 Questions Before You Sign a Rental Agreement**

U.S. Department of Fire Administration

[www.usfa.dhs.gov/downloads/pdf/campus/20questions.pdf](http://www.usfa.dhs.gov/downloads/pdf/campus/20questions.pdf)

This resource lists the key fire safety questions that students should ask and consider when selecting off-campus housing.

## On Line Fire Extinguisher Training

University of Kentucky

[http://ehs.uky.edu/classes/fire/Fire\\_Extinguisher\\_Training\\_files/frame.html](http://ehs.uky.edu/classes/fire/Fire_Extinguisher_Training_files/frame.html)

An online training tool aimed at educating members of the campus community about when and how to use a fire extinguisher.

## 3.2 College and University Websites

### University of Kentucky—University Fire Marshall

<http://ehs.uky.edu/fire/welcome.html>

A comprehensive university website devoted to the issue of fire safety. The website contains information on a wide variety of campus fire-related topics ranging from an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) evacuation policy to a construction plan review process. Notably, the site includes:

- *The Corridor Utilization Program*: This site explains a university program aimed at keeping exit corridors clear. It also contains a notice form that must be completed and approved by the campus fire marshal before an exit corridor at a campus building can be blocked.
- *Fraternity and Sorority Self Inspection Form*: The University Fire Marshal's Office inspects Greek facilities on an annual basis. The office's online inspection form provides fraternities and sororities with a tool to measure their compliance with the university's Fraternity & Sorority Fire/Life Safety Regulations and Policies throughout the year.

### The Police Notebook on Fire Safety

University of Oklahoma

[www.ou.edu/oupd/fslist.htm](http://www.ou.edu/oupd/fslist.htm)

This website contains a series of informative articles and resources devoted to the issue of campus fire safety. Some of the issues addressed include lab fire safety, home fires, kitchen fires, and fire on campus. One resource on this website that deserves special mention is *The Holiday Decorations Policy*. This policy details permitted and prohibited holiday decorations materials and includes instructions on disposing of such materials.

### Fire Prevention Plan

California Institute of Technology

[www.safety.caltech.edu/manuals/fire\\_prevention\\_plan.pdf](http://www.safety.caltech.edu/manuals/fire_prevention_plan.pdf)

At this site, the institute sets out a plan to eliminate the causes of fire and prevent loss of life and property by fire.

### Fire Safety/Fire Marshall's Office

University of Maryland at College Park

[www.des.umd.edu/fire/index.html](http://www.des.umd.edu/fire/index.html)

This site contains a variety of fire safety policies, regulations, and procedures, including the university's fire policy, a policy on stairwells and means of egress, a guide to Greek housing fire inspections, regulations for holiday decorations and for erecting tents on campus, emergency response guidelines, and a residence hall fire safety plan.

## University of Alaska Fairbanks—University Fire Department

[www.uaf.edu/fire/](http://www.uaf.edu/fire/)

The website contains university fire statistics, information on fire prevention, and a copy of the university's fire policy.

### 3.3 Videos

#### "Campus Fire Safety"—Inside Edition

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=efm8CN\\_bSJE](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=efm8CN_bSJE)

This piece is an informative television news journal piece on fire safety in off-campus housing.

#### "Campus Fire Safety"—NBC Nightly News

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=AOibyNiruaA](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AOibyNiruaA)

A television news journal piece on the dangers of fires in off-campus housing. A University of Michigan football player who was involved in an off-campus fire is the central focus of this piece.

#### "Campus Fire Safety 2006"

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=LwNL-fLv3As](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LwNL-fLv3As)

A two-minute video that depicts a simulated burn of a student room and contains fire-safety-related facts and tips.

#### "Get Out and Stay Alive"

U.S. Fire Administration

[www.usfa.dhs.gov/citizens/college/get\\_out.shtm](http://www.usfa.dhs.gov/citizens/college/get_out.shtm)

An educational video produced by the U.S. Fire Administration about the dangers of fire in the college and university setting. Using compelling footage of a fire's aftermath and somber interviews with the friends and families of students killed in campus fires, the program focuses on preventing and responding to a fire. This video is 16 minutes long and can be used as a training tool for students.

#### "Graduation Fatally Denied"

*Campus Firewatch*

[www.campus-firewatch.com/resources/index.html#fatallydenied](http://www.campus-firewatch.com/resources/index.html#fatallydenied)

This is a short, hard-hitting video that tells the story of a fatal fire through the eyes of a fictional student. The DVD costs \$17.95 including shipping.

#### "When Every Minute Counts: Dorm Fire Safety"

Middlebury College Fire Demonstration

Supported by a grant from United Educators, Middlebury College produced a dramatic 11-minute videotape to use as an educational tool in its student orientation program. The videotape depicts a controlled burn of a student's room to demonstrate how quickly a residence hall fire can get out of control and to explain ways to prevent and respond to fires in student residences. This resource is provided free of charge to UE members and is available upon request from United Educators at [risk@ue.org](mailto:risk@ue.org).

## 3.4 Fire-Related Association Websites

### The Center for Campus Fire Safety

[www.campusfire.org/](http://www.campusfire.org/)

The Center for Campus Fire Safety (CCFS) was formed to provide a focal point for the challenges surrounding campus fire safety. The center provides advocacy channels and information on proposed national legislation affecting the issue of campus fire safety. It also provides comprehensive resources and statistics devoted solely to the issue of campus fire safety.

### National Fire Protection Association

[www.nfpa.org/](http://www.nfpa.org/)

The National Fire Protection Association's (NFPA) 300 codes and standards influence every building, process, service, design, and installation in the United States as well as many of those used in other countries. The NFPA's website contains statistics, facts, reports, and publications devoted to fire safety in the United States.

### U.S. Fire Administration—Fire Safety for College Students

[www.usfa.dhs.gov/citizens/college/index.shtm](http://www.usfa.dhs.gov/citizens/college/index.shtm)

This administration of the U.S. government is under the Department of Homeland Security and devotes a portion of its website to fire safety issues affecting college students. In the college fire safety section of its website, an assortment of resources—videos, reports, brochures, and publications—is available free of charge.

### Fire Fighters Near-Miss Reporting System

[www.firefighternearmiss.com/home.do](http://www.firefighternearmiss.com/home.do)

An important concept of fire prevention is to learn from the causes of and responses to past fires. The National Fire Fighter Near-Miss Reporting System helps those involved in fire service to track near misses—those incidents that do not lead to serious injury, death, or property damage—so that firefighters can learn from these events to increase their overall ability to protect themselves and each other.

### International Association of Fire Chiefs—Resources

[www.iafc.org/displaycommon.cfm?an=1&subarticlenbr=20](http://www.iafc.org/displaycommon.cfm?an=1&subarticlenbr=20)

The International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) is a network of more than 12,000 chief fire and emergency officers. The resources section of the website contains documents for downloading on a wide variety of issues affecting fire and life safety, EMS, health and safety, first responders, hazardous materials, homeland security, and professional development.

### National Association of State Fire Marshals

[www.firemarshals.org/](http://www.firemarshals.org/)

The membership of the National Association of State Fire Marshals (NASFM) comprises experienced and knowledgeable fire officials in the United States. State fire marshals are responsible for fire safety code adoption and enforcement, fire and arson investigation, fire incident data reporting and analysis, public education, and advising of governors and state legislatures on fire protection. The website contains links to state fire marshal websites, a listing of events, and recent fire-related news.

### 3.5 UE Publications

**"No Place for Candles," *Catastrophic Claims*, December 2005**

[www.ue.org/membersonly/GetDocument.asp?id=767](http://www.ue.org/membersonly/GetDocument.asp?id=767)

A summary of UE claims involving fires ignited by candles. The publication contains national statistics on campus fire safety, safety tips, and additional resources.

**"Take Control of Fire," *Catastrophic Claims*, September 2004**

[www.ue.org/membersonly/GetDocument.asp?id=645](http://www.ue.org/membersonly/GetDocument.asp?id=645)

A summary of UE claims related to fire. The publication contains national statistics on campus fire safety, safety tips, and additional resources.

**"A Burning Issue on Campus," *Catastrophic Claims*, January 2004**

[www.ue.org/membersonly/GetDocument.asp?id=635](http://www.ue.org/membersonly/GetDocument.asp?id=635)

A summary of UE claims related to fire. The publication contains national statistics on campus fire safety, safety tips, and additional resources.

**"Stopping Young Arsonists," *Safety Dispatch*, August 2003**

[www.ue.org/membersonly/GetDocument.asp?id=522](http://www.ue.org/membersonly/GetDocument.asp?id=522)

A summary of UE claims involving fires that were ignited by arson. The publication contains national statistics on arson related fires, safety tips, and additional resources.

**"Off-Campus Housing: Out of Sight Should Not Mean Out of Mind,"  
*Risk Research Bulletin*, May 2006**

[www.ue.org/membersonly/GetDocument.asp?id=796](http://www.ue.org/membersonly/GetDocument.asp?id=796)

This bulletin examines UE claims involving off-campus housing and identifies fire as a significant off-campus housing risk. The article explains different legal theories that courts have applied to find institutions liable for losses occurring in off-campus housing. Also, helpful risk management advice is given to assist institutions in organizing and preparing students for life in off-campus housing.

### 3.6 New UE Member Benefit

United Educators is pleased to introduce a special benefit for its members. The publication *Campus Firewatch* is now available *free* to UE members at the UE website [www.ue.org](http://www.ue.org). *Campus Firewatch* is the only electronic newsletter focusing exclusively on campus fire safety. Each issue is filled with valuable information on campus fire safety, both on and off campus. To learn more about this new benefit, check out the February 2007 issue of *Campus Firewatch* attached below.

# CAMPUS Firewatch™

February 2007

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## Alcohol and campus-related fires

By Ed Comeau

The profile of students drinking at campuses is changing. “Over time, the percentage of abstainers has risen as has the percentage of heavy episodic alcohol users” reported Beth DeRicco, associate director of The Center for College Health and Safety (which operates The U.S. Department of Education’s Higher Education Center for Alcohol, Other Drug Abuse and Violence Prevention). This is creating a spectrum of drinkers where each end of the spectrum is growing.

There are a number of contributing factors impacting student drinking. In the report “A Call to Action: Changing the Culture of Drinking at U.S. Colleges” published by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, these factors include:

- Living arrangements, where drinking is highest in fraternities and sororities followed by residence halls and then by off-campus housing.
- Colleges with drinking problems include those where the Greek systems dominate and where the athletic teams are prominent

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## Fatal Fires

February 3, 2007

Mississippi State University – Meridian

Off-campus house fire/catastrophic, multiple-fatality fire

Three fatalities

A family of three was killed in an off-campus house fire in Linwood, Mississippi. The fire was reported at 1:07 a.m. and the Linwood Volunteer Fire Department was on the scene to a fully-involved fire at 1:19 a.m. in a one-story, single-family home.

The three victims were found in close proximity to one another, and according to the fire chief, it appeared that they were trying to escape from the fire.

It is unknown if there was a smoke alarm present in the house due to the extensive damage that occurred.

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## Catastrophic, multiple-fatality fires

Campus Firewatch has been tracking campus fire fatalities since January 2000 and, in that time, has identified fires that have killed 103 people in residence halls, Greek housing, off-campus housing and academic buildings. Almost 80% of these fires have occurred in off-campus housing, which is where a majority of the students live.

Of all of these fires, 13 (21%) have caused three or more deaths which are classified by Campus Firewatch as catastrophic, multiple-fatality fires. These fires have killed 44 people out of 103, (43%). In other words, a small percentage of the fires are killing a large percentage of the people.

1/19/00 .....	Seton Hall University .....	3
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9/20/03 .....	University of Minnesota-Twin Cities .....	3
5/22/04 .....	Indiana University .....	3
8/27/04 .....	University of Mississippi .....	3
4/10/05 .....	Miami University .....	3
6/7/05 .....	Conservatory of Recording and Arts .....	3
1/13/07 .....	Marshall University .....	5
2/3/07 .....	Mississippi State University-Meridian .....	3

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Alcohol and Campus-Related Fires Continued from page 1

- First year students
- Males
- Whites

While the report may indicate that the lowest amount of drinking is occurring in off-campus occupancies, this is countered by the fact that almost two-thirds of the students in the country live off-campus, most are older students and therefore have easier access to alcohol and there are far fewer restrictions on behavior in off-campus housing.

Furthermore, almost 80% of the fire fatalities identified by Campus Firewatch have occurred off-campus and one of the contributing factors in a number of them has been impaired judgment from alcohol. This is reinforced by the findings of a study done by USA TODAY where in over half of the 43 fatal fires studied at least one of the students that had died had been drinking. The average blood alcohol count, where available, was 0.12 with a high of 0.304.

Even if the students living off-campus are drinking less than their peers on-campus or in Greek housing, the impact of their actions is clearly more tragic.

A survey by the Core Institute at Southern Illinois University provides a profile of who is drinking and how much.

**Average Number of Drinks per Week**

Year in School	Male	Female
Freshman	7.39	3.86
Sophomore	8.24	3.67
Junior	9.58	3.94
Senior	10.17	4.59

**Definitions**

There are some terms and definitions that need to be clarified when it comes to looking at the campus drinking problem.

A heavy episodic alcohol user, or what is referred to as “binge drinking” in some studies, is someone who drinks three or more times in the previous two weeks and drinks to drunkenness with the intent of getting drunk, reports DeRicco. “What is troubling is that a heavy episodic alcohol user can be a functional student,” said DeRicco. These students are not realizing their full potential and may be suffering from a num-

ber of alcohol-related health issues and developing troubling patterns that will impact their future significantly.

According to the National Institute of Alcoholism and Alcohol Abuse’s definition of binge drinking, “The 5/4 definition of binge drinking is where a ‘binge’ is a pattern of drinking alcohol that brings blood alcohol concentration to 0.08 gram percent or above. For the typical adult this pattern corresponds to consuming 5 or more drinks (male) or 4 or more drinks (female) in about 2 hours.”

The term “drunkenness” refers to when someone reaches the legal limit of intoxication and beyond. In many states, for people under 21 it is a blood alcohol count (BAC) under 0.02 and 0.10 for people 21 or older. Since the drinking age in all states is 21, having a BAC of 0.02 indicates that the person has been drinking.

Tolerance has nothing to do with a person’s blood alcohol count, according to DeRicco. Two different people can be legally intoxicated, but one might not appear as drunk because he or she is able to tolerate higher levels of alcohol. “Women metabolize alcohol differently than men do,” said DeRicco. “That has to do with a higher percentage of body fat. Generally, a woman would get more intoxicated than a man on the same amount of alcohol.”

**How many students are heavy episodic drinkers?**

In a study published in 2002 by the Boston University School of Public Health it was reported that 44 percent of the students randomly surveyed had been involved in “at least one heavy-drinking episode in the year prior to the survey, a percentage that has not changed since 1993.” Another study had similar results.

In the report “Healthy People 2010” published by the U.S. Surgeon General and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, binge drinking was identified for specific reduction, from 39 percent to 20 percent by the year 2010. “Binge drinking is a national problem, especially among males and young adults,” notes the report. “The perception that alcohol use is socially acceptable correlates with the fact that

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Campus fire safety is a complex issue. The information in this newsletter is provided to help you in your efforts to provide as fire-safe a community as possible. However, it is no replacement for professional advice. For further assistance, contact your local fire department.

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more than 80 percent of American youth consume alcohol before their 21st birthday, whereas the lack of social acceptance of other drugs correlates with comparatively lower rates of use.”

An interesting fact that emerged in a study from the Harvard School of Public Health College Alcohol Study was that in states where there are fewer adults who are binge drinkers and with strong laws that discourage excessive consumption, the number of binge drinkers on campus is lower.

“What we discovered is that a student who goes to school in a state with fewer adult binge drinkers is less likely to be a binge drinker,” said Toben F. Nelson of the Harvard School of Public Health College Alcohol Study in a prepared statement. “These states also tend to have well-developed alcohol control policies.” These include, according to Harvard, states that:

- Mandate registering kegs
- Make it illegal to drive with blood alcohol levels of 0.08 percent or higher
- Place restrictions on happy hours, open containers, beer sold in pitchers, and billboards and other types of alcohol advertising.

The NIAAA supports this finding in one of their publications, where they report that, “Prevention strategies that may be especially useful in curbing young adult alcohol use are those that focus on restricting the availability of alcohol. Such measures include raising the cost of alcohol through taxes, limiting where and when alcohol can be consumed, and enforcing policies that help to reduce problems such as drinking and driving.”

What is valuable in looking at the alcohol problem on campus is to compare it to society at large. The NIAAA reports that while studies have found heavy alcohol consumption among people in their twenties, whether they go to college or not, some surveys have found a lower percentage of students drinking than non-students. However, when the students do drink, they are drinking in greater quantities than their non-student peers.

On the positive side, students stop these drinking practices more quickly than the

non-student and have a lower rate of alcohol dependence.

### **The impact of alcohol on campuses**

According to the latest statistics from NIAAA:

- 1,700 college students die from alcohol-related unintentional injuries
- Almost 600,000 are injured
- 97,000 were victims of alcohol-related sexual assault or date rape
- 400,000 students reported having unprotected sex
- 100,000 students reported having been too intoxicated to know if they consented to having sex
- 25% reported academic consequences of their drinking, including receiving lower grades overall
- 2.1 million students drove under the influence
- 11% reported damaging property while under the influence
- 31% of students met the criteria for a diagnosis of alcohol abuse

### **Making Change**

In the DHHS report, the difficulty of implementing change was highlighted because of the nature of alcohol in campuses across the country.

“The tradition of drinking has developed into a kind of culture – beliefs and customs – entrenched in every level of college students’ environments,” states the report. Some of the contributing factors include:

- Establishments close to campus that sell alcohol and depend upon students for their financial success
- Customs on campus that promote drinking such as advertisements at college sports arenas (or even arenas that are named after alcohol distilleries or breweries)
- Alumni that continue the alcohol tradition at sporting and alumni events.
- Environmental and peer influences that actively promotes drinking as a rite of

passage

Making a change is difficult for varied reasons, but one of the leading ones, according to the DHHS report, is the perception that it is an unsolvable problem. “When schools have made efforts to reduce drinking among their students – and many have made considerable effort – they haven’t had significant, campus-wide success. With each failed effort, the image of college drinking as an intractable problem is reinforced, administrators are demoralized, and the likelihood that schools will devote resources to prevention programs decreases.”

### **Drinking and fire safety**

There have been some documents and studies published to provide a linkage between alcohol consumption and its role in fire fatalities that are widely cited. Unfortunately, some of the research used in preparing these studies is quite dated, ranging from 1972 to 1998. The result is that, unfortunately, we do not have a current view on the connection between alcohol consumption and fire injury and fatality

Some of the more current data comes from the NFPA which reports that from 1999 to 2002, an estimated 10 percent of the fatalities in fires were impaired by alcohol. However, since there are different reporting requirements regarding the BAC of victims, this data may vary from state to state, making a national comparison difficult.

Anecdotally, however, fire chiefs in college communities agree that alcohol consumption among students is a significant problem that needs to be addressed. In a number of fatal fires looked at by Campus Firewatch, impaired judgment from alcohol consumption has been one of the contributing factors to the deaths.

Campus Firewatch worked closely with USA TODAY in helping the newspaper prepare a major story on the impact of alcohol on campus-related fire deaths. Research conducted by USA TODAY of 43 fires that killed 62 students found that:

- In 59% of the fatal fires, at least one student who died had been drinking
- In 28% of the fires the smoke detector was absent or had been disconnected

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- 66% of the victims were juniors or seniors
- 65% of the victims were male
- 25% of the fatal fires occurred following a party
- In 21 of the cases where an autopsy indicated the blood alcohol content, the average was 0.12 with a high of 0.304
- Over half, 56%, of the fires occurred on the two weekend days, Saturday or Sunday, with 44% occurring during the rest of the week

## Alcohol and smoke alarm response

Some of the most compelling research is being conducted by Dr. Dorothy Bruck and Michelle Ball from Victoria University in Melbourne, Australia.

In a study conducted by Bruck and Ball, students were given controlled amounts of alcohol to drink and then allowed to fall asleep in their own beds. Once they were fully asleep, they were exposed to gradually increasing levels of sound that simulate smoke alarms and their response was measured. Their response while sober was measured to determine a baseline response as well as their response at 0.05 BAC and 0.08 BAC.

It was found that when students have been drinking it takes a much louder alarm sounding (95 dBA) to respond to smoke alarms than when they are sober. The normal smoke alarm is required to sound at 75 decibels (dBA) at the pillow.

What was troubling is the low level of inebriation (0.05 BAC) that caused the response capability to significantly deteriorate. In 36% of the trials the test subject did not respond until the alarm level was at 95 dBA or did not respond at all when they were at 0.05 BAC. This increased to 42% at the 0.08 BAC.

What is notable is that while the response capability decreases as the blood alcohol level increases, it is not as significant as the increase from sobriety to 0.05 BAC. In other words, it does not take much alcohol to

cause a significant decrease in the ability to react to an alarm. According to the study, "The meaning of this is that even at what many would consider to be low to moderate levels, alcohol can seriously affect a sleeping person's ability to respond to their smoke alarm. In fact, many participants reported feeling only slightly 'tipsy' at bedtime in the 0.05 BAC condition."

Alcohol is a significant problem on many campuses, and it has a direct impact upon fire safety as well. According to the study, "Under benign circumstances, unimpaired adults aged 18 to 64 respond well to smoke alarm signals, and are at a comparatively low risk for death. However, alcohol ingestion greatly increases fire fatality risk across all age groups." The report continues, "The increased mortality rate for those who have been drinking is a very important issue for young adults, who are perhaps less experienced drinkers than their older counterparts, and whose lifestyle traditionally provides more opportunities for partying, but who also have more deep sleep."

The report lists a number of ways that alcohol impairment can impact upon a person's response (or non-response) to a fire alarm, including:

- Failure to hear alarm
- Failure to correctly interpret alarm
- Inappropriate response, such as a failure to avoid a dangerous pathway
- Poor motor functioning, e.g., poor balance and coordination
- Recovery rate from burns is significantly worse for alcoholics, meaning that they may suffer death from more minor injuries than non-alcoholics.

## Smoking and alcohol

In an effort to determine the linkage between smoking and alcohol abuse, a study was undertaken by Drs. Grucza and Chen. In it, they found that there is a definite connection between alcohol abuse and smoking among adolescents aged 12 to 20. According to their research, "Both academic studies and casual observation support the

view that smokers tend to drink, and drinkers tend to smoke. New research using nationally representative data from the U.S. finds that smokers – particularly adolescent smokers – clearly have a greater vulnerability to alcohol-use disorders (AUDs) than do non-smokers."

They go on to point out three key findings of their research:

- "Popular and clinical lore support the strong connection between smoking and alcohol consumption.
- Adolescent smokers appear to have a greater vulnerability to developing alcohol-use disorders.
- Results indicate that smoking "primes" the brain for subsequent addiction to alcohol and possibly other drugs."

Alcohol has been a part of college life for decades. Its impact upon fire safety has always been informally acknowledged by those that have to deal with it on a daily basis. What is needed is a concerted effort to use the loss of life that is occurring from fires where alcohol impairment is a factor as a mechanism to reduce both troubling problems- drinking and fire deaths.

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## WANTED-AUTHORS!

**Do you have an article that you would like to write for Campus Firewatch?**

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**Catastrophic, Multiple-Fatality Fires** Continued from page 1

While conducting this research, it started to emerge that the problem extended beyond the campus environment, and this became even more apparent since January 1, 2007. In the first seven weeks of the year, 88 people have been killed in catastrophic, multiple fatality fires, with almost 60% of them being children. Action was needed to bring this to people's attention, and organizations such as Firehouse.com, Fire Chief Magazine, the International Association of Fire Chiefs, and ABC News, alerted to the growing problem by Campus Firewatch, began campaigns to inform the public about the problem and steps that they can take.

Radio@firehouse.com ([www.radiofirehouse.com](http://www.radiofirehouse.com)) immediately agreed to host a Podcast of experts from across the nation to provide information to the fire service. The panel was made up of Heather Caldwell (Kidde), Judy Comoletti (NFPA), Ben May (Walt Disney World), Ozzie Mirkhah (Las Vegas Fire and Rescue), Peg Paul (Home Fire Sprinkler Coalition), and Alan Shuman (Georgia State Fire Marshal and the National Association of State Fire Marshals). All of these people came together within just days of the Podcast being pulled together and did an outstanding job on such short notice.

Fire Chief Magazine ([www.firechief.com](http://www.firechief.com)) publisher Janet Wilmoth put out several electronic editorials, helping to raise the national awareness. In addition, the International Association of Fire Chiefs ([www.iafc.org](http://www.iafc.org)) issued a nationwide request for fire chiefs to communicate with their local communities through the media. ABC World News Tonight ran a major story about the rising trend of fires on February 17.

Combating this problem will take a concerted effort at the "grass roots" level.

However, until the American public is aware that there is a problem, action won't be taken at the degree needed to stop these tragedies from happening. Mothers Against Drunk Driving ([www.madd.org](http://www.madd.org)) raised the national awareness and made drunk driving unacceptable among the American public and dramatically changed the perspective. This could serve as a model for fire safety by making people aware that they are capable of making the change needed through their own actions.

Fire prevention is a key to the solution. We need to educate the public not only about fire safety (egress, smoke alarms, cooking, candles, smoking, sprinklers, etc), but it needs to be done in a new and different way.

For a number of years, fire prevention has focused primarily on two high-risk groups, the very young and the elderly. However, that leaves a large demographic in the middle, close to two-thirds, that does not routinely receive fire safety information on a regular basis. This is the demographic that are the decision makers. This is the demographic that purchases homes, decides whether or not it will have a working smoke alarm or a residential sprinkler system in it. This is the demographic that needs to be informed about how they have a personal responsibility for fire safety.

In addition, a number of the recent catastrophic, multiple-fatality fires appear to be occurring where socioeconomic factors may be involved. We need to look at how fire safety information is being provided to this group of people and see if there are different and better ways to make them capable of protecting themselves from fires.

By having a better-informed public, they are in a position to not only protect themselves and their families, but to demand a higher level of protection where they live and work every day.

These tragic fires are significant opportunities, the ultimate "teachable moments" to get the messages across. However, we need to reach out to a much wider demographic and in creative and different ways.

Much of this is being done on campuses across the country right now. Schools are being creative in their education programs in an effort to reach students. Through campaigns such as national Campus Fire Safety Month, increased awareness is given to the issues of campus fire safety in an effort to change the mindset of the students. By doing so, when they graduate and they will be the ones who will be making the change needed.

There are approximately 17,000,000 students enrolled in schools right now, and this is an unparalleled opportunity to reach a huge demographic with fire safety information.

Fire deaths have leveled off in the past number of years and there have not been the same significant reductions that were seen after the introduction of smoke alarms in the 1980s and 1990s. By educating students, it will be possible to reduce the tremendous loss of life, not only now but in the future. The opportunity to impact the future fire problem can start now with making the public aware of the fire problem following tragedies such as we have seen in just the first few weeks of 2007.

**Fatal Fires** Continued from page 1

The exact cause of the fire is unknown, but it is believed to be accidental.

Leticia Shipley, 38, was a senior studying psychology at Mississippi State University - Meridian. Her husband, Casey Shipley, 30, and their daughter, Kali, 3, also died in the fire.

These three deaths bring the total number of campus-related fire fatalities to 102 since January 2000. This fire is also classified by Campus Firewatch as a catastrophic, multiple-fatality fire. Since January 2000, 12% of the fatal fires have killed 43% of the victims. In other words, a small number of fires are killing a large percentage of the victims.

### **February 12, 2007 Halifax Community College Off-campus apartment fire One fatality**

A fire in an off-campus apartment claimed the life of Keith Titus Anyonyi, a second-year foreign exchange student from Kenya who was attending Halifax Community College in Weldon, North Carolina. According to Roanoke Rapids Fire Chief Ken Carawan, the fire started in the area around a bed and that it is believed to be related to smoking materials. The apartment's hardwired smoke alarm had been removed from the ceiling and was found on top of the refrigerator. The occupant had been warned a number of times in the past to stop removing the smoke alarm, which was located approximately three feet from the kitchen.

Anyonyi is the 103rd campus-related fire fatality since January 2000.

## **Comprehensive Fire Service Marketing Opportunities**

*By Ben May*

Comprehensive fire and safety prevention—largely in the form of education—presents the largest opportunity for any department to increase its awareness in the community while achieving its primary goal of keeping its citizens safe from harm. It would not be too much to say that the effectiveness of fire and safety education is to a great degree dependent on the effectiveness of its marketing. It would also be true to say that fire prevention and education affords the largest opportunity to affect the most people with our visibility, messages and image.

### **The opportunity**

The issue of prevention is probably the single most important emerging opportunity for any department to gain visibility among the citizens, institutions and businesses it protects. The great opportunity prevention provides is that the department can actually achieve one of the primary functions of its mission—stopping fires and accidents before they occur—through the marketing mechanism, and to the most people.

Think of it this way - how many people really use our service at any one time compared to those that don't? When our citizens do need us, they are usually not in a position to receive a safety message because, by the time they call us, it is already too late. There is also the fact that they may be in a life-or-death situation. At the very least, they are in a state of extreme stress, which is not really a conducive atmosphere for learning a safety message.

The best time to be proactive in reaching the most people is when we can deliver our messages to large amounts of people or to individual business owners in a setting where they are receptive to receiving our message and they can see us as the keeper of the "safety toolbox." Each is dependent on the other and this is the crux of effective marketing and sales. On one hand, the reason this opportunity has emerged deals with the changing nature of our communities, the proliferation of information and the communication mechanisms, which make it more readily available. On the other hand, marketing has been associated with prevention and safety education since these programs began. This kind of marketing is called "social marketing" because it is aimed at changing behavior.

### **Our history is based on suppression**

The history of the development of the U.S. fire service has followed a suppression orientation since its foundation in the 1700s. Typically, the individual who wants to become a firefighter is a mission-driven, action-oriented person who sees him or herself as contributing to the common good of the community. The majority of training and preparation for first responders is directed toward the goal of taking action in emergency situations, whether it is a fire, injury or accident. These incidents can range from small car accidents to major conflagrations or disasters such as the terrorist attacks on 9/11 or the flooding in New Orleans. As first responders, it is important to view ourselves as the source with the responsibility for all forms of fire and life safety protection. This means prevention and education first. While we are trained to respond to action when necessary, it is our mission to lead the community in preventing the incident before it happens, if possible. Enter the marketing mechanism.

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## What is comprehensive prevention?

As first responders offering a wide range of safety services, the fire department has the responsibility for over seventeen different services including fire, EMS, HAZMAT and homeland security, among many others. Approximately, only 20% of actual responses that fire departments across the country make involve fire fighting.

It came across the term “comprehensive prevention” in the recent edition of Managing Fire and Rescue Services edited by Denny Compton and John Granito. The term is full of marketing opportunities. Most marketers want to “own” the market for all of their products and services. The more we use the term comprehensive prevention, the more our customers will get the picture that we do offer a wide range of services and they do not all involve fire or responding to critical incidents. So in this way, comprehensive means the entire array of safety services.

According to Jim Crawford, Fire Marshal of Portland, Oregon, and the author of the chapter on Comprehensive Prevention Programs in Managing Fire and Rescue Services, comprehensive prevention involves the following key elements: engineering, enforcement, education and investigation.

Engineering involves built-in mitigation measures and fixed fire protection before building construction begins. The fire marshal’s office has the responsibility of ongoing plans review for current code maintenance. Enforcement means the establishment of local regulations which mandate how a building will be constructed to mitigate fire and life loss. However, engineering and enforcement can only go so far in ensuring the protection of lives and property.

Most fatal fires, approximately 80 percent, still occur in residences, which

include one- and two-family homes and apartment buildings. We know that automatic residential fire sprinklers will mitigate the fire problem. However, the political process of gaining the kind of legislation for this protection is slow in coming and, even when passed, will first apply to new construction. There will be little or no effect on low-income groups with old construction. As the demographics of our country continue to change, the need for fire and life safety education will increase dramatically. Both in-home mitigation and behavior change are marketing problems that can be addressed through a marketing plan.

Finally, investigation is the fourth element of comprehensive prevention. The creation of almost all fire codes are the result of lessons learned from a series of disaster, including the Iroquois Theatre fire in Chicago in 1903; the Triangle Shirtwaist fire in New York in 1911; the MGM Las Vegas fire in 1980; the 9/11 World Trade Center terrorist attack and The Station nightclub fire in West Warwick, Rhode Island in 2003, among many others.

## The marketing challenge

A number of significant challenges now face the fire service. Our communities continue to see us in a positive light. However, when it comes to changing behavior for our citizens, whether in the form of educating the public or enforcing mandates, the most effective marketing tools are of critical use to each fire department.

The lack of financial and human resources present major obstacles to fulfillment of the prevention and marketing mission. The changing nature of our society in composition, income, size and cultural biases coupled with the lack of local departmental resources present a significant challenge to the fire service. Add to this the increasing threat of hazardous technologies and preparations

for the protection of the homeland.

Some of the more significant forces pulling at our ability to achieve our prevention goals are: the cultural bias of the United States that technology is the only answer to our problems; our attitudes toward fire; and the fire service’s bias toward suppression as reflected in its training and resources. In a typical department, less than 2% of the budget is devoted to fire and safety education, and that division is usually staffed with the fewest number of professionals and paid the lowest salary. These unsung heroes are ingenious in their ability to do their jobs effectively with the meager resources they usually possess.

Luckily, programs such as Learn Not to Burn® and Risk Watch® from NFPA have extended the ability of the fire educator to deliver the message in our elementary schools. However, the “silver bullet” of technology will not impact the fire problem in low-income housing one iota, nor will education for immigrant groups that do not have English as a first language.

Phil Schaeenman of TriData produced a number of seminal works comparing Asian and European fire prevention education programs to those in the United States. The most significant differences deal with the way these other cultures view safety education and personal responsibility as a priority. For example, when an accidental fire occurs in a home in Japan, the citizen is ostracized because the neighbors were exposed to such a serious threat. In the US we bring blankets. This is not a judgment on either approach. It just gives us a wider range of understanding for educational and mandated options.

Fire officers in Japan and France, for example, are all assigned to prevention duties first and for long periods. They are taught that their primary function is that of an engineer who suppresses fire

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as a last option. This is simply a matter of emphasis. It is subtle, but it affects the way a firefighter views him or herself on the job, and how the community views safety and their firefighters. In fact, the Institution of Fire Engineers, a United Kingdom-based society of fire fighters, uses the term engineers to apply to all professionals who deal with fire prevention and suppression.

So, how we see ourselves is one of the key issues with which we must deal when we grapple with prevention and education. It is the excitement factor. We must look beyond suppression as a necessary function of last resort and see ourselves in a multi-dimensional manner, delivering a wide array of services and knowledge to help our citizens protect themselves with us as the activator and guide. This means we must understand how to instill the proactive, mis-

sion-centered mentality to prevention and education so that we are serving the need of our citizen customers for safety. Thanks to the proliferation of information, the increased interest in personal and national safety among the aging baby boomers and all of society since 9/11, we have a real opportunity to fulfill our mission while increasing or marketing support.

Here is a challenge: read your department's mission statement. I will bet you in 95% of the cases; the words prevention and education are in the first or second sentence. It is time to give them the priority they deserve as stated in the departmental mission. Their effective marketing can result in a quantum leap for our awareness and image in our communities, while fulfilling our primary mission.

*This article first appeared in Firehouse magazine and Firehouse.Com*

*Ben May, a Firehouse.Com and Firehouse Magazine contributing editor, has been developing the discipline of fire and emergency services marketing management for the past 15 years. He has been a firefighter and fire commissioner. He is now responsible for business development for Epcot at Walt Disney World Resort and he initiated an alliance with Liberty Mutual Insurance Company and USFA to develop the largest interactive fire education experience in the world at Epcot, "Where's the Fire?" which receive approximately 4 million guests from around the world annually.*

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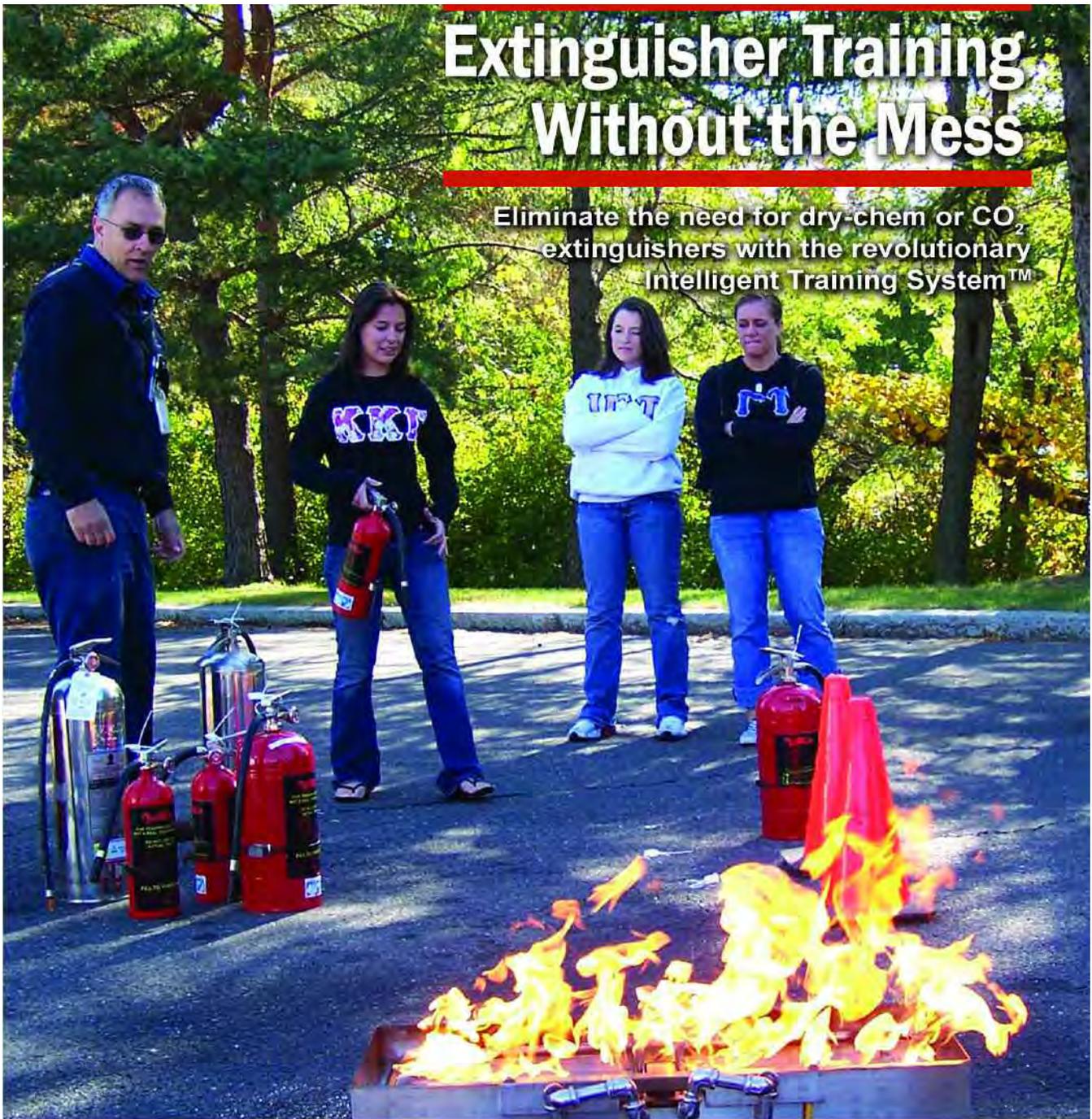
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# CAMPUS Fire Log

The following are brief summaries of incidents that have occurred in college occupancies. Unless noted otherwise, they have been taken from press accounts and have not been verified for accuracy. Several of these incidents will be profiled in future issues of Campus Firewatch.

*If you have an incident that you would like to contribute for this column, please contact us at [publisher@campus-firewatch.com](mailto:publisher@campus-firewatch.com).*

**January 1, 2007**

**Fraternity Fire**

**Tulane University**

**New Orleans, Louisiana**

A fire damaged the unoccupied Kappa Alpha fraternity. All of the members were away for winter break at the time of the fire which started at approximately 9:00 p.m. Five students have been displaced by the fire.

**January 4, 2007**

**Residence Hall Fire**

**Texas State Technical College**

**Waco, Texas**

A fire in a duplex on campus may have been started by a heater. The fire displaced two families.

**January 4, 2007**

**Residence Hall Fire**

**Florida Gulf Coast University**

**Fort Myers, Florida**

A student was attempting to clean an oven and filled the apartment with smoke. He set the oven to the self-clean mode without removing the larger clumps of food.

**January 6, 2007**

**Fraternity Fire**

**Tulane University**

**New Orleans, Louisiana**

The second fire in a week in a fraternity fire at Tulane University caused extensive damage to the building. The fire displaced 10 students from the Zeta Beta Tau fraternity.

**January 8, 2007**

**Residence Hall Fire**

**University of Missouri-Rolla**

**Rolla, Missouri**

A fire in a cafeteria in a residence hall forced the evacuation of approximately 150 students. It was reported that the fire in the cold air return vent caused minimal damage.

**January 8, 2007**

**Off-Campus Apartment Fire (two fires)**

**California Polytechnic State University**

**San Luis Obispo, California**

A fire on January 8 was caused by a smoldering mattress and caused approximately \$20,000 in damage. Workers were repairing the damage from this fire when a sec-

ond fire broke out on January 9 which was caused by a portable light being left too close to combustibles, causing \$50,000 in damage.

**January 7, 2007**

**Off-Campus, Attempted Arson**

**Miami University**

**Oxford, Ohio**

A student was charged with aggravated arson, assault, aggravated menacing and underage intoxication. He attempted to light a glass bottle containing gasoline beneath a balcony that was holding a group of people.

**January 11, 2007**

**Off-Campus Apartment Fire**

**Redlands Community College**

**El Reno, Oklahoma**

Several students lost all of their possessions in an off-campus apartment fire. The fire caused approximately \$250,000 in damage.

**January 13, 2007**

**Fatal off-Campus Apartment Fire**

**Marshall University**

**Huntington, West Virginia**

A fire in an off-campus apartment building claimed the lives of a total of nine people.

The Emmons Junior building was a five-story, unsprinklered building. It is unknown at this time whether there were smoke alarms or a fire alarm system in the building.

The fire reportedly started in a second floor apartment and quickly filled the building with smoke at all levels. According to media reports, seven of the victims were found on the fifth (top) floor.

Three of the people killed in the fire were Marshall University students. Two other people killed were siblings of one of the students who were visiting at the time of the fire.

As of this time, the cause of the fire has not been determined. The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF) assisted in the

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investigation.

Detailed coverage of the incident is available through one of the local television stations at [www.wsaz.com](http://www.wsaz.com).

The five campus-related victims include:

Ben Lucas, 19, student  
 Angel Lucas, 17, sibling  
 Quintin Lucas, 14, sibling  
 Joseph Szilvasi, age unknown, student  
 Joseph Briar Harmon, 40, student

**January 12, 2007**  
**Fraternity Suspended, Building Condemned**  
**West Virginia University**  
**Morgantown, West Virginia**

The Beta Theta Pi fraternity was shut down following a party where local officials determined that the building was overcrowded and the building's fire alarm system was inadequate.

**January 15, 2007**  
**Academic Building Fire**  
**Austin College**  
**Sherman, Texas**

A fire in a building housing the music and arts program started in an electrical room. The cause was reported to be an electrical overload and was related to a power outage the night before. Damage is estimated at approximately \$1 million.

**January 16, 2007**  
**Off-Campus House Fire**  
**Marquette School of Dentistry**  
**Milwaukee, WI**

A student was forced to jump from the second floor of his house during a fire. The student was awakened by a cell phone call and when he opened the door to his room he was confronted by smoke. He reported that there were no smoke alarms on the second floor. He was not injured by the jump and the building was reported to be fully involved when the fire department arrived.

**January 16, 2007**  
**Residence Hall Fire, Sprinkler Save**  
**Northern Arizona University**  
**Flagstaff, Arizona**

A fire in a residence hall room was controlled by the activation of a sprinkler head. The building's fire alarm system was activated at the same time. The building is used primarily by members of fraternities and sororities, and the Delta Delta Delta sorority occupied the wing where the fire occurred.

**January 17, 2007**  
**Residence Hall Fire, Fire Extinguisher Save**  
**Utica College**  
**Utica, NY**

A fire that was caused by a candle sent one student to the hospital for smoke inhalation. The unattended candle set a television on fire and was detected by a smoke detector. A security officer extinguished the fire with a portable fire extinguisher.

**January 18, 2007**  
**Building Under Demolition**  
**Cornell University**  
**Ithaca, New York**

A fire broke out in the attic of a building undergoing demolition. The fire was quickly extinguished by the fire department.

**January 18, 2007**  
**Off-Campus Apartment Fire**  
**West Virginia University**  
**Morgantown, West Virginia**

Six students were displaced by a fire in a 3-1/2 story, off-campus house. Occupants in the building alerted other occupants by yelling to them to get out. The fire was reported to cause \$30,000 in damage.

**January 19, 2007**  
**Fraternity Fire**  
**Hillsdale College**  
**Hillsdale, Michigan**

A fire broke out during initiation ceremonies at the Sigma Chi fraternity. The fire was caused by candles igniting sheets hanging from the rafters.

**January 16, 2007**  
**Residence hall fire**  
**University of Northern Iowa**  
**Cedar Falls, IA**

A student set fire to some string which he then threw into his wastebasket, causing a small fire.

**January 27, 2007**  
**Off-campus fire**  
**Northwest Missouri State University**  
**Maryville, MO**

A fire in an off-campus house where a student lived killed two of its occupants, who were not students. One student was forced to jump from a second-story window to escape the fire. He suffered serious injuries and burns from the fire. Eight students were displaced by the fire.

NOTE: These deaths are not being classified as campus-related fatalities.

**January 27, 2007**  
**Off-campus fire**  
**University of Iowa**  
**Iowa City, IA**

An exterior fire spread quickly into the walls and attic of a house occupied by five University of Iowa students.

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**January 27, 2007**  
**Academic building fire**  
**University of California at Davis**  
**Davis, California**

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A malfunctioning fan ignited a box of office supplies in an office. There were only 12 employees in the building since it was the weekend, and the fire was detected when one of them smelled smoke and investigated.

**January 29, 2007**  
**Off-campus fire**  
**Various area colleges**  
**Bridgeport, CT**

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A house occupied by a number of foreign students attending area colleges caught fire. The cause of the fire appears to be accidental and caused minor damage, according to media reports.

**January 31, 2007**  
**Residence hall fire-sprinkler save**  
**Chester College of New England**  
**Chester, NH**

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A fire displaced 32 students in a residence hall. The fire started in a storage area and was caused by a worker using a heat gun to thaw frozen pipes.

**January 31, 2007**  
**Residence hall fire**  
**California University of Pennsylvania**  
**California, PA**

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Smoke forced the evacuation of a residence hall shortly after 11:30 a.m. A heat pump malfunctioned and filled several floors with smoke.

**February 3, 2007**  
**Off-campus fatal house fire**  
**Mississippi State University – Meridian**  
**Meridian, MS**

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A senior psychology student, her husband and their three-year-old daughter were

killed in an off-campus house fire in Linwood, Mississippi. All three bodies were found in the same bedroom, and it appeared that they were trying to escape. It is believed that space heaters may have been the cause of the fire. The fire was detected by a neighbor

Leticia Shipley, 38, her husband Casey, 30, and their daughter, Kali, 3 died in this fire.

**February 4, 2007**  
**Residence hall fire, sprinkler save**  
**University of Connecticut**  
**Storrs, Connecticut**

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A candle in a residence hall was the cause of a fire that was controlled by the activation of the building's automatic fire sprinkler system. According to Chief Williams, the student left a candle unattended which ignited combustibles on the wall and spread to her laptop computer.

The fire department received a supervisory alarm and dispatched an engine and ladder. Upon arrival they observed the fire through a window. They attempted to make entry through the door, which was secured, and entered through the window just as the sprinkler activated, controlling the fire.

UConn's policy does not allow candles in the residence halls.

**February 3, 2007**  
**Fraternity Fire, Chi Phi**  
**University of Virginia**  
**Charlottesville, VA**

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As part of a ritual for new pledges, a pile of debris was set on fire outside of a fraternity. According to media reports, the fire department stated that the burned debris included computer, tables and other plastic items.

**February 3, 2007**  
**Off-campus apartment fire**  
**University of Virginia**  
**Charlottesville, VA**

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A fire in a kitchen in an off-campus apartment caused approximately \$1,000 in damage.

**February 3, 2007**  
**Off-campus house fire**  
**University of Minnesota Twin Cities**  
**Minneapolis, MN**

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A fire in an off-campus house displaced 20 students shortly after midnight. Initial reports is that the cause of the fire is electrical, but the fire department official report has not been issued as of press time. The occupants attempted to extinguish the fire using a fire extinguisher but were unsuccessful.

**February 7, 2007**  
**Residence hall fire**  
**C.W. Post University**  
**Brookville, NY**

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A fire that was started by an electrical short circuit damaged a residence hall room. The fire occurred at approximately 12:37 p.m. and was extinguished by the fire department. There was significant damage to the room and smoke and water damage to the two-story building, according to the Nassau County Fire Marshal's Office.

**February 7, 2007**  
**Residence Hall Fire**  
**Dartmouth College**  
**Hanover, NH**

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A fire that originate in the area of a base-board radiator broke out at approximately 8:00 p.m. The occupant of the room noticed smoke coming from the radiator and left to get his undergraduate advisory. By the time they returned, the smoke had spread to the hallway and activated the building fire alarm system.

**February 8, 2007**  
**Off-campus house fire**  
**University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh**  
**Oshkosh, Wisconsin**

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An off-campus house fire has displaced three students from the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh. The fire was caused when one of the occupants carelessly disposed of a cigarette that landed on a couch

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on the porch. The couch was ignited and the fire spread to the house, causing extensive damage.

**February 10, 2007**  
**Fraternity house fire**  
**Southern Methodist University**  
**University Park, TX**

A fire in the Sigma Chi fraternity may have been caused by lint being ignited in a heating duct. The fire caused approximately \$10,000 in damage.

**February 15, 2007**  
**Off-campus apartment fire**  
**Texas State Technical College**

Approximately 16 people, a number of them students from Texas State Technical College, were displaced from their apartments which were destroyed by a fire started by a space heater. According to press reports, the fire department reported the building was fully involved when they arrived on the scene Thursday afternoon.

**February 15, 2007**  
**Residence Hall Fire**  
**Central Michigan University**  
**Mount Pleasant, Michigan**

A fire in a sofa in a high-rise residence hall was controlled by the activation of the building's automatic fire sprinkler systems. The fire, on the seventh floor, is being treated as an arson fire.

**February 12, 2007**  
**Off-campus fatal fire**  
**Halifax Community College**  
**Weldon, North Carolina**

A fire in an off-campus apartment claimed the life of Keith Titus Anyonyi, a second-year foreign exchange student from Kenya who was attending Halifax Community College in Weldon, North Carolina. According to Roanoke Rapids Fire Chief Ken Carawan, the fire started in the area around a bed and that it is believed to be related to smoking materials. The apartment's hardwired smoke alarm had been removed from the

ceiling and was found on top of the refrigerator. The occupant had been warned a number of times in the past to stop removing the smoke alarm, which was located approximately three feet from the kitchen.

**February 17, 2007**  
**Academic building under construction**  
**University of Texas Medical School**  
**Houston, TX**

A fire broke out in a building that was under construction and being renovated as a research facility on the fifth floor. Cause of the fire was unknown at press time.

**Sunday, February 18, 2007**  
**Off-campus house fire**  
**Susquehanna University**  
**Selinsgrove, PA**

Four students in an off-campus house were alerted to an early-morning fire by the activation of a smoke alarm. They attempted to extinguish the fire before evacuating safely.

**February 18, 2007**  
**Residence Hall Fire**  
**Central Michigan University**  
**Mount Pleasant, MI**

The second fire in a week broke out in a residence hall on the sixth floor of Wheeler Hall. According to press reports, the fire started in a trash bag.

**February 19, 2007**  
**Residence hall fire**  
**Knoxville College**  
**Knoxville, TN**

A fire in a residence hall at Knoxville College in Knoxville, Tennessee, shortly after 6:30 p.m. has displaced a large number of students. According to media reports, the fire broke out in a room on the top floor of a three-story residence hall and spread across the hall, destroying two rooms. No one was injured in the fire which caused extensive smoke and water damage throughout the building.

Colston Hall houses 80 students, which is approximately half of the school's total student body. There are reports in the press that the building had been renovated last summer.



## Campus Firewatch Website

The value of this newsletter doesn't stop with just this copy.

Visit its companion website at [www.campus-firewatch.com](http://www.campus-firewatch.com), where you will find a wealth of information relating to campus fire safety.

If you have something that you would like to contribute, please send it to us at [publisher@campus-firewatch.com](mailto:publisher@campus-firewatch.com)

See you there!

# LEGISLATION

## Update

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### **HR 592 Campus Fire Safety Right-to-Know Act**

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#### **Sponsors**

**Congressman Bill Pascrell (D-NJ)**  
2464 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515  
Phone: (202) 225-5751  
Fax: (202) 225-5782  
[www.pascrell.house.gov](http://www.pascrell.house.gov)

**Congressman Joe Wilson (R-SC)**  
212 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515  
Phone: (202) 225-2452  
Fax: (202) 225-2455  
[www.joewilson.house.gov](http://www.joewilson.house.gov)  
40 cosponsors

#### **Status**

**House**  
Introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives and referred to the House Committee on Education and Labor on January 19, 2007

#### **Summary**

The Campus Fire Safety Right-to-Know Act calls upon colleges, universities, fraternities and sororities to make fire safety information about their buildings publicly available and report it to the U.S. Department of Education on an annual basis. This legislation passed the U.S. House of Representatives in 2006 but has to be reintroduced in the 110th Congress.

### **S 354 Campus Fire Safety Right-to-Know Act**

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#### **Sponsors**

**Senator Frank Lautenberg (D-NJ)**  
324 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington DC 20510  
Phone: (202) 224-3224  
Fax: (202) 228-4054  
[www.lautenberg.senate.gov](http://www.lautenberg.senate.gov)  
4 cosponsors

#### **Status**

**Senate**  
Introduced in the U.S. Senate and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.  
on January 22, 2007

#### **Summary**

The Campus Fire Safety Right-to-Know Act calls upon colleges, universities, fraternities and sororities to make fire safety information about their buildings publicly available and report it to the U.S. Department of Education on an annual basis. This legislation passed the U.S. House of Representatives in 2006 but has to be reintroduced in the 110th Congress.

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## A 1421 Campus Fire Safety Right-to-Know

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### Jurisdiction

State of New Jersey

### Sponsor

Assemblyman Frederick Scalera  
800 Bloomfield Ave.  
Lower Level  
Nutley, NJ 07110  
Phone: (973) 667-4431

### Summary

Requires New Jersey institutions of higher education to disseminate fire safety information about their facilities to students, parents or guardians, and employees.

### Status

This bill unanimously passed the Assembly and has been introduced in the Senate.

## H. Res. 95 Campus Fire Safety Month

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### Sponsors

Congresswoman Stephanie Tubbs Jones (D-OH-11)  
1009 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515-3511  
(202) 225-7032 (tel)  
(202) 225-1339 (fa  
)[www.house.gov/tubbsjones/](http://www.house.gov/tubbsjones/)

Congressman Edward Whitfield (R-KY-1)  
411 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515-1701  
(202) 225-3115 (tel)  
(202) 225-3547 (fax)  
[www.house.gov/whitfield](http://www.house.gov/whitfield)

2 cosponsors

### Status

Introduced in the House and referred to the House Committee on Education and Labor on January 24, 2007

### Summary

This bill will recognize September as Campus Fire Safety Month. In 2006, for the first time, the U.S. House of Representatives passed this resolution. In addition, 31 governors across the country issued proclamations also recognizing September as Campus Fire Safety Month.

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## **HR 642 College Fire Prevention Act**

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### **Sponsors**

**Congresswoman Stephanie Tubbs Jones (D-OH-11)**  
1009 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515-3511  
(202) 225-7032 (tel)  
(202) 225-1339 (fax)  
[www.house.gov/tubbsjones](http://www.house.gov/tubbsjones)

**Congressman Edward Whitfield (R-KY-1)**  
411 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515-1701  
(202) 225-3115 (tel)  
(202) 225-3547 (fax)  
[www.house.gov/whitfield](http://www.house.gov/whitfield)

15 cosponsors

### **Status**

Introduced in the House and referred to the House Committee on Education and Labor on January 23, 2007

### **Summary**

This bill will provide \$100 million a year for five years in matching grants for the installation of fire suppression and detection systems in residence halls, fraternities and sororities. This bill has been introduced in previous Congresses but has not seen any action.

## **HR 643 Collegiate Housing and Infrastructure Act of 2007**

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### **Sponsors**

**Congresswoman Stephanie Tubbs Jones (D-OH-11)**  
1009 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515-3511  
(202) 225-7032 (tel)  
(202) 225-1339 (fax)  
[www.house.gov/tubbsjones/](http://www.house.gov/tubbsjones/)

**Congressman Paul Ryan (R-WI-1)**  
1113 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515-4901  
(202) 225-3031 (tel)  
(202) 225-3393 (fax)  
[www.house.gov/ryan](http://www.house.gov/ryan)

9 cosponsors

### **Status**

Introduced in the House and referred to the House Committee on Ways and Means on January 23, 2007

### **Summary**

This bill will allow contributions made to Greek organizations that are going to be used for physical plant improvements to be tax-deductible. This bill was introduced in the 109th Congress but did not see any action.

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## S 582 Fire Sprinkler Incentive Act

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### Sponsors

Senator Gordon Smith (R-OR)  
404 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510-3704  
(202) 224-3753 (tel)  
(202) 228-3997 (fax)  
[www.gsmith.senate.gov](http://www.gsmith.senate.gov)

Senator John Rockefeller  
531 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510-4802  
(202) 224-6472 (tel)  
(202) 224-7665 (fax)  
[www.rockefeller.senate.gov](http://www.rockefeller.senate.gov)

2 cosponsors

### Status

Introduced in the U.S. Senate and referred to the Committee on Finance on February 14, 2007

### Summary

To amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to classify automatic fire sprinkler systems as 5-year property for purposes of depreciation.

## Indiana S 0174

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### Sponsors

Senator Robert Jackman (R-District 42)  
200 West Washington Street  
Indianapolis, IN 46204  
(317) 232-9400

### Status

This bill was introduced and referred to the Committee on Corrections, Criminal, and Civil Matters on January 11, 2007

### Summary

This bill will make it a \$10,000 fine for landlords that do not install or maintain smoke detectors in dwellings. If a fire should occur and result in a fatality or bodily injury, the penalty is a Class D felony that can include six months to three years in prison.

January 23, 2007

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD—*Extensions of Remarks*

E179

TRIBUTE TO COACH TONY  
NAPOLET

**HON. TIM RYAN**

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 23, 2007*

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the recently completed season and still ongoing career of someone who is an institution in Ohio High School football and the community of Warren, Ohio. Coach Tony Napolet was awarded this year's Coach of the Year award after leading the Warren JFK Eagles to a 14-1 season capped by a berth to the Division 5 State championship game.

Although I never had the opportunity to play for him, Coach Napolet has been a friend and mentor throughout my entire adult life. The year following my graduation from Warren JFK, Tony Napolet was brought on for what he anticipated as being a 1-year stint as JFK head coach. That season, after squeaking into the playoffs, Napolet and the Eagles rattled off an amazing run to win the State Championship. At the conclusion of that season Coach Napolet agreed to come back to coach the Eagles indefinitely. He followed his title winning season with another berth to the State championship game. Although Coach Nap and the Eagles suffered a 1-point loss, the 2nd straight appearance in the State championship game solidified Tony Napolet's niche in the upper echelon of Ohio high school football coaches. And that was hardly the twilight of Coach Nap's career. He has since coached the Eagles to numerous winning seasons and three more State semifinal appearances including this past season's appearance in another State championship game.

Overall Coach Tony Napolet has garnered three top ten AP rankings, five state semi-final appearances, a winning percentage of .716 during his time at Warren JFK, and an overall coaching record of 191 wins, 84 losses and 3 ties.

All of the records, statistics, and awards, however, cannot speak to the influential and inspirational man that is Tony Napolet. One thing that everyone who has "ever played for Coach Napolet knows is that whether you were the starting quarterback or the third string defensive lineman, you were treated exactly the same. Not only was everyone an equal on the field, but also off the field, mid-season, off-season, and after you had graduated. Tony Napolet is known in the community just as much for what he does for young people after they graduate, as he is for his coaching prowess. Of course there are the typical phone calls to college coaches and recommendation letters, but his involvement in his former players' lives doesn't end there. Coach Napolet is the one who helps you find a summer job when you're home from school, or serves as a reference on an internship application. Since Coach Napolet is such an integral part of the JFK High family, he in turn treats everyone as a member of his family.

Tony Napolet is every part of what a high school football coach should be. He realizes and has always realized that the role he plays is not just that of football coach but as someone who is helping prepare young men for the next step in their lives, whether that involves football or not.

So, today I am not honoring a coach and his distinct record, but rather a great man who also happens to be a fantastic coach.

THE CAMPUS FIRE SAFETY RIGHT  
TO KNOW ACT OF 2007

**HON. BILL PASCRELL, JR.**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 23, 2007*

Mr. PASCRELL. Madam Speaker, 7 years ago this month, Seton Hall University in South Orange, NJ, suffered a horrible tragedy, as a fire ripped through one of its residence halls. That fire killed 3 young freshmen and wounded 58 other students.

Unfortunately, campus fires have become all too common. Each year, thousands of fires rage through the campuses and off-campus housing of our colleges and universities. Since January 2000, almost 100 people have died in campus-related fires across the country. In 2006 alone, 12 people were killed.

Last week, I was proud to reintroduce the Campus Fire Safety Right to Know Act of 2007, H.R. 592, in response to this problem. This bill is widely supported, and has garnered 28 bipartisan cosponsors to date. Senator FRANK LAUTENBERG has also introduced companion legislation in the Senate, S. 354.

This landmark legislation calls for colleges and universities to report vital fire safety information to the U.S. Department of Education. This will allow prospective students and their parents to make informed decisions regarding a fire-safe school based on criteria such as the installation of automatic fire sprinkler systems, automatic fire alarm systems, fire prevention training and other related factors.

The Campus Fire Safety Right to Know Act does not mandate upgrades; it simply requires schools to collect and report data crucial to the safety and well-being of students and other residents.

The fact that this legislation was passed by the House of Representatives in the 109th Congress was due, in no small part, to the tremendous support provided by leading fire safety organizations. These and other organizations have joined with me once again to support this vital legislation in order to protect our students on campuses across the Nation. They are working tirelessly every day to improve fire safety for our citizens, and I want to recognize and commend them for their support and their leadership.

These fourteen organizations include Campus Firewatch, The Center for Campus Fire Safety, the Congressional Fire Services Institute, the International Fire Chiefs Association, the International Association of Fire Fighters, the International Code Council, the International Fire Marshals Association, the National Association of State Fire Marshals, the National Electrical Manufacturers Association, the National Fire Protection Association, the National Fire Sprinkler Association, the National Volunteer Fire Council, the Society of Fire Protection Engineers, and Underwriters Laboratories.

Madam Speaker, I urge Congress to act now on this important legislation so that we may ensure a safe school environment for all college and university students. When we entrust our children to any institution, we expect

that they will be in a safe environment. And we have the right to expect that much.

PRESIDENT BUSH EXPECTED TO  
SPEAK OUT ABOUT GLOBAL  
WARMING TONIGHT—NEEDS TO  
ACT

**HON. DONALD M. PAYNE**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 23, 2007*

Mr. PAYNE. Madam Speaker, over the last week we've heard that President Bush is finally going to admit tonight what most of us have known for years—that global warming is actually occurring and that we as a Nation need to take action.

Tonight's expected pronouncement from the President is welcome news, but it does not excuse the administration's past record on global warming.

Over the last six years, the Bush administration has served as a major roadblock to reversing dangerous warming trends. The President walked away from international efforts to help reduce this growing danger to our planet, refusing to actually lead on this critically important issue.

In my home State of New Jersey, we are proud of the fact that former Governor Richard J. Codey took decisive action over a year ago to strengthen our State's efforts to combat global warming by classifying carbon dioxide as an air contaminant. This action made New Jersey one of the first States in the Nation to take such a step. By contrast, the Bush administration has been in constant denial about environmental dangers to our planet.

I hope President Bush provides more than just lip service on global warming as he addresses the Nation tonight. After all, the President has pledged to reduce our dependence on foreign oil every year since he took office, while his policies have consistently made the problem worse.

Last year was the hottest ever recorded in our Nation's history. Our planet simply cannot afford more inaction from this administration. I hope that the President is serious about joining us in producing policies that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The time for action is long overdue.

CONGRATULATING THE 2007 NAACP  
HUMANITARIAN OF THE YEAR  
HON. CAROLYN Q. COLEMAN

**HON. G. K. BUTTERFIELD**

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 23, 2007*

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor a great woman in the African American community and a vocal leader in North Carolina, the Honorable Carolyn Q. Coleman. Mrs. Coleman will receive the 2007 NAACP Humanitarian of the Year Award at the 23rd Annual NAACP Humanitarian of the Year Banquet on Saturday, January 27 in Durham, North Carolina. Her work over the last year is inspiring but what truly makes her remarkable is the scope of her deeds over a lifetime.

# fires...

- pollute our air
- require millions of gallons of water to extinguish.
- fill our landfills with unrecyclable trash.
- AND KILL ALMOST 4,000 PEOPLE EACH YEAR.



**HELP PROTECT OUR ENVIRONMENT AND SAVE LIVES...**

- **LOOK FOR SPRINKLERED HOUSING.**
- **INSTALL A SMOKE ALARM AND MAKE SURE IT IS ALWAYS WORKING.**
- **LEARN HOW TO USE A FIRE EXTINGUISHER.**
- **USE CANDLES SAFELY.**
- **DISPOSE OF SMOKING MATERIALS PROPERLY.**

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