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News Release

For Immediate Release

2013 ends with fewer fires in Springfield

The City of Springfield saw a significant improvement in the number of total fires, house fires and fire fatalities in 2013. The total number of fires fell nearly 18% from 1061 in 2012 to 865 in 2013. The number of residential structure fires fell from 511 to 424. That's a 17% decrease. Finally, in 2012 there were 6 fire fatalities compared to 2 in 2013 ó a 66% reduction.

No fatalities as a result of accidental structure fires.

There were two fire fatalities in 2013 which is below Springfield's average of 3.5 per year. The first occurred in February on North Texas Avenue as a result of a murder suicide. The second fire fatality occurred in May on South Plaza Avenue when a man burned himself on a kerosene heater while working on his car outside. He later died as a result of those burns.

Education is the key.

The reduction in fires could be attributed to a number of factors, including an increased focus on fire safety education. In 2013, the Springfield Fire Department began offering new programs including a juvenile fire setter program, fire extinguisher training and fire safety education for middle-school students. Fire crews made an effort to prevent apartment fires by visiting 8,500 apartment units and providing tenants with fire safety information. And during fire safety month in October, they provided fire safety education to 6,850 elementary students ó 3,000 more than 2012.

Careless smoking still a concern.

Despite a focused educational campaign geared toward curbing careless smoking, it continues to be a big problem in Springfield. It remains the number cause of fire fatalities in Springfield and is to blame for nearly 30% of all residential fires. The percent of fires caused by careless smoking in Springfield is 15 times the national average. The Springfield Fire Department will continue to educate residents about this very serious issue, by reminding smokers to dispose of their cigarettes in a deep, sturdy ash tray.

Prevention in our priority.

In 2014, the Springfield Fire Department will continue its focus on how to prevent and respond to fires, educating families about the importance of working smoke alarms, having a home evacuation plan, cooking safety, responsible smoking and more. If you are interested in learning more about our fire safety presentations and other trainings available to the public, call (417) 864-1500.



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