



NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release

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Contact: Fire Chief Sammy Negron, 843-263-6843

Beaufort-Port Royal Fire Department leads by examples in Fire Prevention Month

Statistically, house fires most often start with someone leaving the kitchen stove or being careless with a cigarette. Fire-related injuries happen in homes without a working smoke alarm. Locally, that's been the case as well, giving Beaufort-Port Royal firefighters hands-on examples when it comes to educating residents during this month's recognition of Fire Prevention Month.

"We address fire safety and prevention all year long, but during October we have more school visits and make an added effort to showcase the program," said Capt. John Robinson of the Beaufort-Port Royal Fire Department.

Already this month, he and other firefighters have met with hundreds of school children, introducing them to a safer lifestyle through recognition and prevention of fire hazards. They've taught them basics of fire prevention and fire safety, including the time-tested "stop, drop and roll" routine.

"We want to be sure the younger children understand the dangers of fire, but we also want them to talk to their parents about a fire escape plan and the value of smoke detectors. We encourage everyone to prepare as if they will face a house fire at some point. Early detection, having an escape plan and knowing how to react are key points in saving lives and property," Robinson said.

Fire Prevention Month has its origins with the Great Chicago Fire of 1871, which burned for two days, killed hundreds of people, and left an estimated 10,000 homeless.

“Our firefighters are hosting fire station visits from school children and their parents from all over Beaufort County,” Fire Chief Sammy Negron said. “Our firefighters are visiting classrooms, local businesses and civic clubs and groups, spreading the word about prevention.

Nationally, more than 360,000 home fires are reported every year, resulting in millions of dollars in lost property and thousands of lost lives, Negron said. “The best way to avoid this tragedy is to be aware and be prepared,” he said.

Beaufort-Port Royal firefighters in recent weeks have battled blazes, two were caused by unattended cooking, two by improperly discarded smoking materials, one by improper burning of construction materials in an uninspected fireplace, and from a charcoal grill with hot embers left unattended and too close to the house after a backyard cookout.

According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) cooking equipment continues to be the leading cause of residential fires in the United States.

Here are fire prevention and safety tips from the Beaufort-Port Royal Fire Department:

- Always have a working smoke detector and test it every 6 months
- Never leave cooking unattended
- Always ensure cigarettes, cigars and other smoking materials are fully extinguished
- Never overload electrical circuits or extension cords
- Have a family escape plan and practice it
- Get out and stay out! Call the fire department from a neighbor’s home
- Assume a fire can happen in your home, then work hard to prevent it.

If you would like to visit the fire station or have a presentation at you next meeting please contact the City of Beaufort / Town of Port Royal Fire Department at 843-525-7055 or e-mail your request to city-fire@cityofbeaufort.org.

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