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**Side-by-Side Fires to be Set by The Alaska Division of Fire and Life Safety  
To Help Alaska Residents Understand Risks and  
Home Safety Technology**

(ANCHORAGE, Alaska)— The Alaska Division of Fire and Life Safety and the Mat-Su Fire Chiefs Association will intentionally light two fires in front of a live audience at the Alaska State Fair. The events will take place on August 29<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 pm and September 2<sup>nd</sup> at 6:00 pm at the Alaska State Fair grandstand area.

"Sometimes people just need to see it to believe it," said Mahlon Greene, Alaska Division of Fire and Life Safety Public Education Coordinator. "There's nothing like the heat and smoke of a real fire to help adults and children understand just how fast a home fire is. With our side-by-side comparison, we can show both the danger of fire and the value of having a fire sprinkler system installed."

Live burn demonstrations are a safe but dramatic way for fire departments across the country to provide a lasting impression on the danger of home fires. Alaska residents will see firsthand why a typical home fire becomes deadly in three minutes or less.

Firefighters and fire sprinkler pipe fitters built two structures for each demo. Each room contains common furnishings, window treatments and a working smoke alarm. Only one of the rooms contains a fire sprinkler.

For safety purposes, firefighters and fire trucks from the Mat-Su Fire Chief's Association will be present.

"By providing this unique live fire comparison, people not only gain an appreciation for fire power; they also realize what an incredible advantage it is to have a fire sprinkler system installed if fire breaks out," said Greene.

Following an emergency call, it takes 9-12 minutes, on average, for a fire department to arrive on the fire scene. By that time, a fire in an unsprinklered home will have spread, causing smoke and heat damage and threatening the lives of the residents.

In a sprinklered home, a fire is under control very quickly. Damage to the home is limited and the risk to residents and first responders is minimized

Many people already understand how vital it is to have working smoke alarms to warn us of a fire. But home fire sprinklers are not as well known or understood. That's one reason why the nonprofit Home Fire Sprinkler Coalition (HFSC) secured a federal Fire Prevention & Safety Grant to develop a free kit to help fire departments build and present side-by-side fire and sprinkler burn demonstrations in their communities.

Facts about homes with sprinkler systems:

- Fire sprinklers are supplied by household water – usually off the water main. Just like ordinary plumbing, sprinkler system piping is hidden behind walls and ceilings.
- The sprinklers are positioned along the piping and can be seen in ceilings or up high along certain walls.
- Sprinklers are activated only by the high temperature of a fire – typically between 135°-165°F.
- Burned toast or other smoke cannot set off a sprinkler; neither can a smoke alarm that activates.
- Sprinklers are designed to flow between 10-25 gallons of water per minute. That's about 10-15 times less water flow than fire department hoses, and under far less pressure.
- By operating while a fire is still small, a sprinkler controls or extinguishes a fire, slowing the spread of poisonous smoke and deadly heat.
- That fast and effective action gives family members more time to get out safely, saving lives.
- And, the sprinkler confines the fire damage so that surrounding rooms are protected, saving valuables.

Free information is available about home fire sprinklers from HFSC's Web site. Visit [HomeFireSprinkler.org](http://HomeFireSprinkler.org) to learn more about this life-saving technology and to see video clips and animations that answer common questions. You can even read about real-life fires where sprinklers saved lives.

The Alaska Division of Fire and Life Safety is proud to work in partnership with the Home Fire Sprinkler Coalition and bring this important educational opportunity to Alaska. If you're building a new home, renovating or thinking of buying, take a few minutes to learn how you can add this life-saving fire safety option.

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