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MEDIA ALERT

For Immediate Release

Release Date: June 20, 2008

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Home Fire Safety Practices Make All the Difference

RICHMOND, VIRGINIA: – Do you have a fire escape plan? If yes, do you practice it often? Does everyone in your household know what to do when the smoke alarm sounds? These are just some of the questions you should ask yourself if you would like to increase you and your family's chances of surviving a house fire.

According to the National Fire Protection Association, "In the United States, eight out of 10 people killed in a fire die in one that has occurred in a home." Statistics from the Virginia Fire Incident Reporting System convey that 8,519 residential structure fires occurred in Virginia households in 2007 with heating and cooking-related fires as two of the leading known causes. These fires resulted in an estimated 67 civilian deaths, 356 civilian injuries, 1 firefighter death, 123 firefighter injuries, and an estimated fire loss of \$198 million.

What should these statistics tell Virginia households? W. G. Billy Shelton, Executive Director of the Virginia Department of Fire Programs says, "Knowledge of the top known causes of home fires should direct a homeowner's attention to the location of these fires, such as the kitchen and the utility room. With simple safety practices in these areas citizens can prevent fire deaths and protect their family's safety in the event of a fire."

In addition to cooking and heating fire safety practices to prevent deadly home fires, it is important that Virginian's develop home fire escapes plans and routinely maintenance life saving devices, such as smoke and carbon monoxide alarms.

**Practice Home Fire Safety. Protect Yourself and Your Family.
Prevent Home Fires.**