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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Arson Awareness Week Is May 5-11, 2013**  
**“Reducing Residential Arson”**

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**Charleston, WV – The West Virginia State Fire Marshal's Office announces this year's Arson Awareness Week theme: “Reducing Residential Arson”.**

*The following information is provided by the United States Fire Administration (USFA) and the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA).*



The goal for this year's Arson Awareness Week, which takes place May 5 – 11, 2013, is to look at ways to reduce residential arsons.

According to the USFA's National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS) data and the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), more than 16,000 intentionally set fires in home every year result in 300 deaths. Of these arsons there are an average of 700 injuries and \$500 million dollars in direct property

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damage. Arsons rob neighborhoods and communities of valuable assets such as lives and property.

Fire departments can help communities reduce the occurrence of arson and decrease its effects by making residents aware of measures to safeguard their homes.

### *What can I do to protect my home against Arson?*

- Illuminate exterior and entrances to your home. Install motion-activated lights on all sides of the house. These are relatively inexpensive.
- Clear all obstructions. Trim or remove brush that blocks the view of a home from the street.
- Install smoke alarms and fire sprinkler systems. The combination of smoke alarms and home fire sprinklers reduces the likelihood of death from a fire. This is **the** most effective fire loss prevention and reduction measurement.
- Keep doors and windows locked. A simple locked door could be the deterrent that saves a home from arson.
- Clean your yard. Remove excess of piles of leaves or vegetation and clean around your house and garage to remove unused paper, trash, cans of paint or other materials.
- Clean up vacant homes. Make sure to secure abandoned and vacant homes. Keep doors and windows locked or boarded up with plywood. Remove any abandoned vehicles. Make sure all utilities are disconnected.

**The West Virginia State Fire Marshal's Office urges everyone to have a comprehensive fire protection plan that includes smoke alarms, residential sprinklers, and practicing a home fire escape plan.**

For more information, including a media kit for the **2013 Arson Awareness Week** campaign, go to <http://www.usfa.dhs.gov/aaw/>.

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