

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Growing need to spend more effort in teaching adults 65 and older.
- Teaching Special Needs Children Fire Safety
- Remembering When training Nov. 14-16th in Boston

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So...What About the Old Guy?

By Dean Hunt, Fire Marshal,
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Not to be disrespectful to the senior members of our communities with the title of this article (I am fast approaching that category. Although my kids claim I am already there), I want to take time and discuss a growing need for us to spend more effort in educating these people.

According to United States Fire Administration (USFA), Adults age 65 and older are at a higher risk of death from fire than any other age

How to Plan

As a Fire and Life Safety Educator, you could cover a wide range of risk reduction education. These can be broken up into five general categories: fire, burn, injury,

group (See the USFA report [Fire in the United States Fifteenth Edition](#))



Approximately 32 percent of all fire deaths involve older adults. In Utah, an adult over age 65 is two and half times more likely to die in a fire than any other age group.

It is important for us to teach fire prevention and planning to this population if we are going to reduce the risk of deaths and injuries from fire.

Never before in the history of the United States has the growth in the number and proportion of older adults been so significant. There are two factors that come into play. 1) Longer life spans and 2) Aging baby boomers. The population of Americans aged

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disaster, and emergency medicine. Each of these general categories contain a plethora of topics including fire escape planning, match and lighter safety, bike hel-

rets, car seats, disaster response, CPR, and how to use 9-1-1.

Add to that the variety of audiences you could educate: emergency re-

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So...What About the Old Guy? *continued*

65 and older will double in number, to 71 million by 2030 (source: [CDC](#)).

There are a number of resources available for us as fire and life safety educators to help with a program.

NFPA Remembering When is a self contained program that can be purchased from NFPA for \$58.00 to \$75.00. This program includes lesson plans, brochures, fact sheets, game cards, and more to help with your program.

The Utah Office of the State Fire Marshal wants to help five

more fire departments initiate Remembering When in their community by providing training, curriculum and supplies. They have copies of the curriculum you can review.

The USFA has developed a program that is available for no charge at <https://www.usfa.dhs.gov/citizens/focus/olderadults.shtm>. This site has downloadable and customizable lesson plan, poster, and handout material.

The Home Safety Council at <http://www.homesafetycouncil.org/index.asp>.

They have lesson plans, checklists, posters, handouts and a video. Be sure to sign up in their Expert Network.

There are a lot of programs available for us to use to help educate these people in our communities. It just takes a little effort to get one, learn it and present it.

I am a firm believer that if you educate people to be fire safe and then keep reinforcing those things with them periodically they will be better protected. After all isn't that what we are trying to accomplish in the fire service?

“Protection of Life and Property”?



How to Plan *continued*

sponders including your own firefighters, city officials including your own fire chief, businesses, schools, older adults, children and people with disabilities.

The good news is that with careful planning, you can focus on those things most important for your community and you can find the proper resources and partners to help you save lives.

Planning includes looking at your community's risks and selecting which concerns are most important to your agency.

You may choose to focus on the most frequent incidents, such as kitchen or heating fires.

You may choose to focus on those with the greatest impact. Greatest impact would most likely be preventing a fire-related death. Though your department may not have ever responded to a fatal fire, the impact of one in the future would be great to you and to the entire community.

Then look to see who is most affected by these types of fire, where they start, why they start and when.

What is the attitude of your community toward the problem? What resources do you have right in your community? Who already works with the people most affected by your fire problem? Who

can offer you wisdom, guidance, or influence with the community?

Build a community team to help you, review what programs are out there and select one or tailor something for your community, choose how you will measure your progress and then implement your program, reporting progress regularly.

More guidance can be found at [Public Fire Education Planning: A Five-Step Process](#) or for communities with few residents, check out [Public Fire Education Planning for Rural Communities: A Five-Step Process](#).



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Fire Safety for Children With Special Needs



People with special needs are at increased risk of injury from many areas including fires and burns. There are two new tools out there for you to use.

One is an online social story for children with autism and one is a video series for parents of children with special needs.

NFPA has a free, online tool for teaching fire safety to children with autism. Experts agree that most children with autism learn best from a social story. Not only is the online storybook personalized, but you can “turn the pages” on the computer. When you get to the end, it is

easy to start over. The repetition is good for everyone, especially children with autism.

Families can visit the story as many times as they wish. A blank story prints easily to use as a handout.

<http://www.nfpa.org/itemDetail.asp?categoryID=1953&itemID=46172&URL=Safety%20Information/For%20consumers/People%20with%20disabilities/Autism>

Safe Kids USA has launched a fire and life safety video series for all families, including families of children with special needs. The first of the series is an

overview of escape planning with children who have a cognitive disorder, are hard of hearing, are blind, or who use a wheelchair.

<http://www.safekids.org/safety-basics/special-needs/>

Scroll down for the Fire Safety for All Families and Burn safety for Families with Children Who Have Special Needs videos.

Both of these resources are good training for firefighters so they understand updated safety messages and those for people with special needs.



This interactive story makes learning about fire safety fun!





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Our Mission is to identify, develop, and promote ways and means of protecting life and property from fire-related perils through direct action and coordination of Utah Fire Services.

Utah Fire and Life is an electronic newsletter dedicated to sharing information, resources, and news with the fire and life safety educators in Utah and our friends across the country.

The first electronic edition was published October 2008 as the *Utah Public Fire Educator*. Past editions can be downloaded at no cost at <http://publicsafety.utah.gov/firemarshal/newsletter.html>

The Utah Office of the State Fire Marshal provides this newsletter through their outreach efforts. Any comments and questions may be directed to Monica Colby at the contact information to the left.

Remembering When training Nov 14 – 16, 2010 in Boston

The Remembering When Conference is made for success. The fire department partners with another agency who provides in-home services for older adults.

One person from each agency attends the training and receives enough materials to run the program for one year. During the first year, this team conducts five older adult safety trainings, conducts two train-the-trainers for those providing in-home safety checks, and

visits at least 25 homes.

The deadline for [applications](#) is August 6, 2010.

<http://www.nfpa.org/itemDetail.asp?cate-goryID=1990&itemID=46836&URL=Training/Scholarships,%20awards,%20grants/For%20the%20fire%20service/Remembering%20When%20Confer-ence&rss=publiceducation.xml>

