

FEATURE

CAFB ready for fire prevention week

Fire department prepares

By Staff Sgt. Jason Grove
437 CES fire prevention flight

 October 9, 1871, sparked a proverbial fire throughout North America to further fire safety in the United States and Canada. The roots of Fire Prevention Week are set in the Great Chicago Fire, which occurred on that day.

The Great Chicago Fire ravaged the city, killing more than 300 people, leaving 100,000 homeless and destroying more than 17,000 structures over 2,000 acres in 27 hours.

Chicago quickly rebuilt, and within a couple of years residents began celebrating their successful restoration to memorialize the anniversary of the fire with festivities.

Intending to observe the Chicago Fire's anniversary with a more serious commemoration, the Fire Marshals Association of North America, the oldest membership section of the National Fire Protection Association, decided the 40th anniversary of the Great Chicago Fire, Oct. 9,

1911, should be observed not with festivities, but in a way that would keep the public informed about the importance of fire protection. This was expanded to Fire Prevention Week in 1922.

National Fire Prevention Week is always the week in which Oct. 9 falls. Each year, a specific theme is chosen and commemorated throughout the United States.

The non-profit NFPA, which has officially sponsored Fire Prevention Week since its inception, selects the annual theme for Fire Prevention Week.

This year, Fire Prevention Week will span Oct. 8-14, and the theme is "The Great Escape."

The NFPA continues today to make National Fire Prevention Week a priority and counts on the participation and efforts of tens of thousands of fire and safety professionals, emergency volunteers and other individuals working to reduce the risk of fire and the toll it takes.

For more information about Fire Prevention Week, call the 437th Civil Engineer Squadron fire department at 963-3777.



Photo by Senior Airman Jason Smith

Senior Airman Matthew Coleman (left) and Tech. Sgt. Horace Hightower, 437th Civil Engineer Squadron firefighters, work to replace a valve as part of fire extinguisher maintenance.

Sparky the fire dog says: Remember home fire escape basics:

- If your first exit is blocked by smoke or fire, use your second exit to escape. If you must escape through smoke, stay low and crawl under the smoke to safety.

- Once you're outside, call the fire department immediately. Tell them if there are still any people or pets in your home.

- NEVER go back inside a burning building. Once out, stay out! (Only firefighters who wear spe-

cial turnout gear are trained to enter a burning building.)

- Practice your home fire escape plan at least twice a year.

About smoke alarms

- Help you make sure your home's smoke alarms are working.

- Test your smoke alarms once a month by pushing the test button. If the smoke alarm makes a loud sound, then you know

it's working. If there's no sound, it's time to replace the batteries.

- Replace the batteries in your smoke alarms once a year, or whenever they make a chirping noise, which means the batteries are running low.

- Replace smoke alarms that are more than 10 years old.

For more information, contact the base fire department.

Sparky's safety spot:



When the smoke alarm sounds, get out of your house quickly and stay out. No one should ever go back inside a burning building except a trained firefighter. Call the fire department from a neighbor's house or other phone outside your home.

(Sparky information obtained from www.sparky.org)

Charleston AFB Fire Prevention Week Schedule of events

Tuesday:

10 a.m. and 3:30 p.m.-- Sparky the Fire Dog will visit the Child Development Center and the Youth Center respectively.

There will be fire drills in various base facilities through out the day.

Wednesday:

9 a.m.--Sparky will visit the BX and Commissary.

There will be fire drills in various base facilities through out the day.

6:30 p.m.-- The fire department will hold a public fire-fighting demonstration at the training area on Davis Street.

Thursday:

There will be fire drills in various base facilities through out the day.

6-9 p.m.--Smoke house interactive escape practices for the public will be held at 1561 Chance Drive.

Oct. 13:

11:30 a.m.--A display will be set up at the BX.

3:15 p.m.--There will be a parade starting at the main fire department building and turning onto Hill Boulevard then turning left on Jackson Drive to O'Neal Avenue, back to Hill, then to Jackson again, onto Batson Drive, Gross Avenue, O'Neal, Lawson Drive then ending at the BX. After the parade, firetrucks will be on display at the BX.