



NEWS RELEASE

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(West Linn Fatal Fire Serves as a Tragic Reminder; Media Event Planned)

A West Linn house fire last weekend proved deadly Wednesday afternoon when a 47 year-old woman that had been rescued and resuscitated by TVF&R firefighters on scene, succumbed to her injuries at Legacy Emanuel Burn Center.

Fire kills more than 3,000 people each year. The majority of fatal fires include three common ingredients: occurs in a home...while people are sleeping...and no working smoke alarm is present. Tragically, these ingredients existed in the West Linn house fire. Firefighters responding to the West Linn fire reported almost zero-visibility when they entered the home. The heavy black smoke had already filled the hallways and rooms of the home, and blackened the windows. The home had a smoke alarm but it was not operable at the time of the fire.

It's the smoke that kills. TVF&R Public Information Officer Karen Eubanks states, "A house fire is nothing like what you see on TV or in the movies. It produces dark and deadly smoke that can fill your home in minutes and one 'breath' can confuse you to the point that you never make it out alive." She added, "This is why firefighters wear air packs when entering a burning building and use thermal imagers to 'see' in smoke-filled buildings."

Media Event

Date / Time: Friday (February 26) at 11:00 am

Location: TVF&R's Training Center at 12400 SW Tonquin Road in Sherwood

Simulating a house fire (smoke machine), media will have the chance to experience a smoke-filled room. TVF&R Captain Milt Villegas will discuss how deadly smoke is and how to increase your chances of surviving a fire.

Increase your chances of surviving a fire with **working smoke alarms** and a **fire escape plan**. Smoke alarms are designed to activate early while a fire is still small and deadly smoke has not yet filled your escape routes.

Working smoke alarms give you time – time to escape and time to call the fire department.

- Install smoke alarms on every level of your home, between the living and sleeping areas. For optimum protection, place an alarm in each bedroom.
- Test your alarms monthly – push the 'test' button until it sounds. Include your children so they recognize the sound.
- Never remove the battery for false alarms like cooking smoke or shower steam.
- Smoke alarms have a life expectancy - replace them every 10 years.

Fire doubles in size every 30 seconds so it is critical that you know what to do when the alarm goes off. Prepare yourself and family by developing a **Fire Escape Plan**:

- Identify two exits from every room and a meeting place outside.
- Crawl low when exiting the home (deadly smoke rises) and call 9-1-1 from a neighbor's house or your cell phone.
- Make sure everyone knows - once out, stay out.
- Practice your plan at least once a year, especially at night.

TVF&R has a free Smoke Alarm Program. If you do not have a working smoke alarm, contact the District today at 503-649-8577. You can also visit TVF&R's YouTube channel (www.youtube.com/user/TualatinValleyFire) to watch a Fire Escape Planning video, or its website at www.tvfr.com for more fire safety information.

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