



## OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

October 7-13, 2012

### *Fire Prevention Week*

Fire Prevention Week was established to commemorate the Great Chicago Fire of 1871 that killed more than 250 people, left 100,000 homeless, destroyed more than 17,400 structures and burned more than 2,000 acres. The fire began on October 8, but did most of its damage on October 9, 1871.

In 1920, President Woodrow Wilson issued the first National Fire Prevention Day proclamation, and since 1922, Fire Prevention Week has been observed. Fire Prevention Week is the longest running public health and safety observance on record. The President of the United States has signed a proclamation proclaiming a national observance every year since 1925.

Homes are the locations where people are at greatest risk from fire. Home fires killed more than 2,600 people in the United States in 2010 and fire departments responded to more than 369,000 home fires. In California, figures show that 70% of reported structure fires are residential and account for 90% of fire deaths.

Cooking is the leading cause of home fires and home fire injuries, while heating equipment and smoking are the leading causes of home fire deaths. Working smoke alarms cut the risk of dying in reported home fires in half and home fire sprinklers further increase survivability by 80%.

Residents who have planned and practiced a home fire escape plan are more prepared and will therefore be more likely to survive a fire. California's first responders are dedicated to reducing the occurrence of home fires and home fire injuries through prevention and protection education. California's residents are responsive to public education measures and are able to take personal steps to increase their safety from fire, especially in their homes.

The 2012 Fire Prevention Week theme, "Have Two Ways Out" effectively serves to remind us all of the simple actions we can take to stay safer from fire during Fire Prevention Week and year-round.

Sincerely,



EDMUND G. BROWN JR.