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**STATE OF INDIANA**

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## **State Agency Urges Hoosiers to “Prevent Home Fires”**

*Fire Prevention Week will be observed October 5-11*

INDIANAPOLIS – Governor Mitch Daniels today proclaimed October 5-11, Fire Prevention Week in Indiana. The Indiana Department of Homeland Security (IDHS) is joining thousands of national, regional, state and local organizations pledging to “Prevent Home Fires” during the nationally recognized week.

This year’s campaign focuses on preventing all the leading causes of home fires – cooking, heating and electrical equipment, and smoking materials. Additionally, fire safety educators will be teaching local residents how to plan and practice escape from a home in case a fire occurs.

“Only a small percentage of families have thought about making and practicing an escape plan,” said Jim Greeson, Indiana State Fire Marshal. “You only have a couple of minutes to get out during a fire, so you have to know what you are doing before something happens.”

While most people feel safe in their homes, the reality is that home fires are much more common than you might think. There were nearly 4,300 home fires reported in 2007 in Indiana, resulting in approximately 100 Hoosier deaths.

“Whether it’s smoking outside the home, keeping space heaters at least three feet away from anything that can burn, or staying in the kitchen when you are using the stovetop, there are easy things you can do to keep your home and family safe from fire,” added Greeson.

There are also a number of simple steps that you can put into action to keep your home safe from fire:

- **Cooking:** Stay in the kitchen when you are frying, grilling, or broiling food. If you leave the kitchen for even a short period of time, turn off the stove.
- **Heating:** Keep all things that can burn, such as paper, bedding or furniture, at least 3 feet away from heating equipment.
- **Electrical:** Replace cracked and damaged electrical cords; use extension cords from temporary wiring only. Consider having additional circuits or receptacles added by a qualified electrician.
- **Smoking:** if you smoke, smoke outside; wherever you smoke, use deep, sturdy ashtrays.

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