



Lakewood Fire District No. 1

733 Cedar Bridge Avenue
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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Subject: Fire Prevention Week

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Fire Prevention Week October 8th through 14th, 2023

The following information is provided by the Board of Fire Commissioners of Lakewood Fire District No. 1, in conjunction with Fire Chief Jonathan Yahr, and the members of the Lakewood Fire Department.

In conjunction with Fire Prevention Week, **The Lakewood Fire Department is hosting Fire Prevention Day on Sunday, October 15, 2023, from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.** This event will be held at Red Square which is in downtown Lakewood at 3rd Street and Clifton Avenue. There will be interactive Fire Service demonstrations, Apparatus demonstration, Gift Bags with Fire Safety information, and Fire Safety videos for viewing.

The history of Fire Prevention Week has its roots in the Great Chicago Fire, which began on October 8, 1871, but lasted 27 hours and incurred the most damage the following day. It remains one of the best-known fire disasters in the world. As a result, October 9, 1871, is the date most often connected with this tragic conflagration. In the end, the Great Chicago Fire killed more than 250 people, left 100,000 homeless, destroyed more than 17,400 structures and burned more than 2000 acres. While the origin of the fire has never been determined, there has been much speculation over how it began. One popular legend was that Mrs. Catherine O'Leary was milking her cow when the animal kicked over a lamp, setting O'Leary's barn on fire and starting the spectacular blaze. It is a less well-known fact that on the same day of the Great Chicago Fire, the Peshtigo Fire roared through Northern Wisconsin, killing 1,152 people, and burning more than a million acres.

On the Great Chicago Fire's 40th anniversary, the former Fire Marshals Association of North America (now the International Fire Marshals Association, or IFMA) sponsored the first National Fire Prevention Day, advocating an annual observance as a way to keep the public informed about the importance of fire prevention. In 1920, President Woodrow Wilson issued the first National Fire Prevention Day proclamation, and since 1922, National Fire Prevention Week has been

observed on the Sunday-through-Saturday period in which October 9th falls. In addition, the President of the United States has signed a proclamation pronouncing a national observance during that week every year since 1925 making Fire Prevention Week the oldest safety commemoration.

Dedicated to raising public awareness about the dangers of fire and how to prevent it, the National Fire Prevention Association, or NFPA is the official sponsor of Fire Prevention Week.

According to NFPA, [cooking](#) is the leading cause of home fires, with nearly half (49 percent) of all home fires involving cooking equipment; cooking is also the leading cause of home fire injuries. Unattended cooking is the leading cause of home cooking fires and related deaths. In addition, [NFPA data](#) shows that cooking is the only major cause of fire that resulted in more fires and fire deaths in 2014-2018 than in 1980-1984.

“These numbers tell us that more public awareness is needed around when and where cooking hazards exist, along with ways to prevent them,” said Lorraine Carli, vice president of the Outreach and Advocacy at NFPA. “This year’s Fire Prevention Week campaign will work to promote tips, guidelines, and recommendations that can help significantly reduce the risk of having a cooking fire.”

Following are cooking safety messages that support this year’s theme, “Cooking safety starts with YOU! Pay attention to fire prevention”:

- Always keep a close eye on what you’re cooking. For foods with longer cooking times, such as those that are simmering or baking, set a timer to help monitor them carefully.
- Clear the cooking area of combustible items and keep anything that can burn, such as dish towels, oven mitts, food packaging, and paper towels.
- Turn pot handles toward the back of the stove. Keep a lid nearby when cooking. If a small grease fire starts, slide the lid over the pan and turn off the burner.
- Create a “kid and pet free zone” of at least three feet (one meter) around the cooking area and anywhere else hot food or drink is prepared or carried.

“Staying in the kitchen, using a timer, and avoiding distractions that remove your focus from what’s on the stove are among the key messages for this year’s Fire Prevention Week campaign,” said Carli.

To learn more about Fire Prevention Week and this year’s theme, “Cooking safety starts with YOU! Pay attention to fire prevention,” visit www.fpw.org. Additional Fire Prevention Week resources for children, caregivers, and educators can be found at www.sparky.org and www.sparkyschoolhouse.org. Additional Fire Safety Information for parents, children and educators can be found by visiting the Fire District Website at www.lakewoodfd.org.