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NEWS RELEASE

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Department of Commerce

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OHIO DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

STATE FIRE MARSHAL AND ROSS COUNTY SHERIFF ANNOUNCE FREE SMOKE ALARM PARTNERSHIP

State Fire Marshal Larry Flowers today announced a partnership with the Ross County Sheriff's Office that could potentially save the lives of Ross County citizens. The Ross County Sheriff's Office will distribute smoke alarms as part of Project S.A.F.E. (Smoke Alarms For Everyone).

Project S.A.F.E. will provide free smoke alarm evaluations for every resident within Ross County who lives outside the Chillicothe city limits. If the evaluations determine batteries or alarms are needed, they will be provided and installed at no cost. The program's batteries and smoke alarms are provided by the Ross County Sheriff's Office and is supplemented by the Division of State Fire Marshal.

"This is the first time the State Fire Marshal has partnered with a law enforcement agency to ensure that smoke alarms are being installed and maintained," said State Fire Marshal Larry Flowers. "Only a working smoke alarm can save lives and this ensures that more people will be protected from the dangers of fire."

"Project S.A.F.E. is another valuable tool enabling us to protect our citizens," said Ross County Sheriff George Lavender. "We have the resources and the ability to quickly respond to a citizen's request for assistance with their smoke alarms and fire protection needs. This will be a benefit to our local fire departments and law enforcement agencies."

Recent statistics show as many as 90 percent of Ohio's fires with fatalities or injuries occur in homes with no smoke alarms, no working smoke alarms or smoke alarms that might not have activated. Smoke alarms can double the chances of a person of escaping a night time fire.

Eligible citizens in Ross County who live outside the city limits of Chillicothe may request a smoke alarm through Project S.A.F.E. by calling 740-773-1186. Chillicothe residents may request an evaluation from the Chillicothe Fire Department's Project S.A.F.E. program by calling 740-773-2212.

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