Fast facts

FACT: Cigarettes are a **leading cause of home fire fatalities** in the United States, killing 700 to 900 people - smokers and nonsmokers alike - per year.

FACT: Smoking-material fires killed 800 people and injured 1,660 others in 2005. Ninety-three percent of the deaths and 78 percent of the injuries were in home fires.

FACT: Property losses from smoking-material fires total hundreds of millions of dollars each year.

FACT: There were 82,400 smoking-material structure fires in the United States in 2005.

FACT: Fires caused by smoking materials are actually on the decline, thanks in part to more stringent standards for fire-resistive mattresses and upholstered furniture, public education, and a dramatic decrease in the number of cigarettes consumed per adult in the United States.

FACT: The risk of dying in a home structure fire caused by smoking materials rises with age. Between 2002 and 2005, one-third (34 percent) of fatal smoking-material-fire victims were age 65 or older.

FACT: One-quarter of victims of smoking-material fire fatalities are not the smokers whose cigarettes started the fire: 34 percent are children of the smokers; 25 percent are neighbors or friends; 14 percent are spouses or partners; and 13 percent are parents.

FACT: NFPA research in the mid-1980s predicted that fire-safe cigarettes would eliminate three out of four cigarette fire deaths. If cigarette manufacturers had begun producing only fire-safe cigarettes then, an estimated 17,000 lives could have been saved by now.

FACT: Mattresses and bedding, upholstered furniture, and trash are the items most commonly ignited in smoking-material home fires.

FACT: Between 2002 and 2005, almost half (42%) of fatal home smoking-material fire victims were sleeping when injured; one-third (32%) were attempting to escape, to fight the fire, or to rescue others.

Source: NFPA's Fire Analysis and Research Division
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