



NY Fire Consultants, Inc. Fire Safety Message

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Fire Safe Cigarettes

On Monday, June 28, 2004, New York became the first state to adopt an important fire safety law requiring the sale of fire-safe cigarettes. Congress has been active on this issue as well, with recent legislation sponsored by Senator Richard J. Durbin (D-IL) introduced in the Senate. The American Burn Association has strongly supported the adoption of such legislation for many years and fully endorses recent efforts and initiatives on this important issue.

ABA Fact Sheet on Fire-Safe Cigarettes

Cigarettes are the leading cause of fatal home fires in the United States.

- Annually, between 900 and 1,000 people in the United States die from fires started by cigarettes and an additional 2,500 to 3,000 are injured.
- More than 100 victims who die every year are children and nonsmokers.
- The cost of human life and property damage exceeds \$6 billion every year.
- In 1997, there were more than 130,000 cigarette related fires.



What is a Fire-Safe Cigarette?

A fire-safe cigarette has significantly less propensity to ignite furniture or mattresses when carelessly discarded. Small design changes including use of less dense tobacco, less porous paper, a smaller diameter, filter tip, and no added citrates to the paper are key components of a fire-safe cigarette. Although the technology to produce fire-safe cigarettes has been available for more than a decade, the tobacco industry refuses to manufacture and distribute them.

History of the Fire-Safe Cigarette

- 1929 First congressional research in fire-safe cigarettes is conducted by the National Bureau of Standards.
- 1974 Legislation mandating fire-safe cigarettes introduced in US Senate. Passes Senate and fails in House of Representatives.
- 1984 Federal Cigarette Safety Act of 1984 (Congressman Joseph Moakley, D-MA) mandated formation of a Technical Study Group to determine if it is technically and economically feasible to make a fire-safe cigarette.
- 1987 Technical Study Group reports to the US Congress that is technically and economically feasible to produce cigarettes that are more fire safe.
- 1990 Federal Fire Safe Cigarette Act of 1990 (Joseph Moakley, D-MA) mandated the development of a fire-safe test method for cigarettes.
- 1993 Technical Advisory Group reported to Congress that a fire safety test method had been developed in order to promulgate a fire safety standard for cigarettes. 1999 H.R. 1130, the Fire Safe Cigarette Act of 1999 (Joseph Moakley, D-MA) was introduced. This bill will require the establishment of a cigarette safety standard and direct the Consumer Product Safety Commission to implement this standard within 18 months of the date of enactment. After 18 months, only fire-safe cigarettes can be sold or manufactured in the United States.
- 2000 New York State passes the first state law requiring fire-safe cigarettes.
- 2002 ABA supported legislation introduced in both the Senate and the House.
- 2004 ABA supported legislation (Cigarette Fire Safety Act of 2004) introduced in the House and Senate. 2004 Legislation requiring the sale of fire-safe cigarettes takes effect in New York.
- 2005 ABA supported legislation (Cigarette Fire Safety Act of 2005) introduced in the Senate.



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You can help!

Many lives have been lost and people seriously injured --- injuries and deaths that could have been prevented by availability of fire-safe cigarettes. The Fire Safe Cigarette Coalition encourages you to contact your representative and urge him or her to support fire-safe cigarette legislation. The name and address of your Congressional Representative can be found by calling (202) 224-3121 or at www.house.gov or www.senate.gov.

ABA Position Statement Regarding Fire-Safe Cigarettes

Cigarettes are the most common ignition source for fatal residential fires, accounting for approximately 29% of the national fire deaths. Every year, fires started by cigarettes are responsible for more than \$6 billion in societal costs and direct property damage, about 2500 injuries and over 1000 deaths. More than a hundred fatal victims are innocent bystanders - children and nonsmokers.

Cigarettes are designed to continue to burn when left unattended. The typical scenario is the delayed ignition of a sofa, chair or mattress from a lit cigarette that is forgotten or dropped by a smoker whose alertness may be impaired by alcohol or medication. Cigarettes vary in their potential to start fires, depending on cigarette design and content. The thermal fire safety is defined as a cigarette with reduced propensity for starting a fire when dropped or left unattended. The technology needed to produce fire safe cigarettes has been available for over a decade.

The American Burn Association has been a strong advocate for the development of fire-safe cigarettes for more than 15 years, supporting past legislation on the issue and participating in two US Government studies that successfully demonstrated the technical and economic feasibility of commercial production of fire safe cigarettes.



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The American Burn Association strongly and actively supports local, state and federal legislation mandating development and production of fire safe cigarettes. The American Burn Association supports the efforts of the Fire Safe Cigarette Coalition and the passage S. 389 in the Senate.

NY Fire Consultants Services:

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