

FIRE PREVENTION WEEK 2017

Fire Prevention Week has its roots in the Great Chicago Fire, which occurred on October 9, 1871. This tragic fire killed some 300 people, left 100,000 homeless, and destroyed more than 17,000 structures. The origin of the fire has generated speculation since its occurrence, with fact and fiction becoming blurred over the years. One popular legend has it that Catherine O'Leary was milking her cow when it kicked over a lamp, setting the O'Leary barn on fire and starting the spectacular blaze. However the massive fire began, it swiftly took its toll, burning more than 2,000 acres in 27 hours. The City of Chicago quickly rebuilt, however, and within a couple of years residents began celebrating their successful restoration by memorializing the anniversary of the fire with festivities.

The International Fire Marshal Association decided on the 40th Anniversary of the Great Chicago Fire, that it should be observed not with the festivities, but in a way that would keep the public informed about the importance of fire prevention. October 9, 1911 marked the first National Fire Prevention Day.

In 1920, President Woodrow Wilson issued the first national Fire Prevention Day proclamation. Every year since 1925, the President of the United States has signed a proclamation pronouncing the Sunday through Saturday period in which October 9 falls a national observance.

The Cypress Fire Protection District continues today to make Fire Prevention Week a priority. Working together, with school programs about fire safety, providing fire safety information to senior citizens, and fitting homes with smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, we can reduce the risk of fire and the toll it takes on our society.