

Salem fire demonstrates need for passage of fire-safer cigarette bill

by Bend Weekly News Sources

A smoldering cigarette left in an unoccupied bedroom caused more than \$70,000 in damage and could have resulted in multiple deaths had not the homeowner alerted his son and grandchildren to get out of the house. This life threatening event reinforces the need for Oregon to have a fire-safer cigarette law.

Members of the Oregon Fire Safety Coalition and the Office of State Fire Marshal have worked tirelessly and successfully gathering support for Oregon's proposed fire-safer cigarette legislation. The proposed law is designed to reduce fires by allowing only fire-safer cigarettes to be sold in the state. Fire-safer cigarettes are designed to go out if not puffed on.

Cigarettes are a leading cause of fire deaths, injuries and property loss in Oregon. From 1999 through 2005, cigarettes caused 8, 824 fires throughout the state resulting in 37 deaths, 185 injuries and direct property losses of \$32.2 million.

Oregon would join New York, Vermont, California, New Hampshire, Illinois and most recently Massachusetts in adopting fire safety standards for cigarettes. Oregon's proposed legislation mirrors that already adopted by these states and all of Canada. This same legislation was proposed in the 2005 Oregon Legislature. The Senate passed the measure, but it was not heard in the House.

“Currently, more than one fourth of the U.S. population is under the protection of this law. We hope Oregonians will soon be protected as well,” said Oregon Chief Deputy State Fire Marshal Randy Simpson.

More information may be found at: http://www.oregon.gov/OOHS/SFM/Oregon_Fire_Safety_COA.shtm

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