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**Date: Sept. 16, 2015
For release: Immediate**

Bartlesville Fire Department joins Red Cross effort to install smoke alarms for citizens

Nationwide campaign aims to reduce number of home fire deaths, injuries

Bartlesville firefighters will join the Red Cross-Bartlesville Chapter in visiting local homes as part of the organization's Home Fire Preparedness Campaign to teach people how to be prepared for home fires and install free smoke alarms where needed.

According to the Red Cross of Oklahoma, seven times a day someone in the U.S. dies in a home fire. Countless others suffer injuries. To combat these tragic statistics, the Red Cross has launched a nationwide campaign to reduce the number of deaths and injuries due to home fires by 25 percent over the next five years.

The Home Fire Preparedness Campaign is happening all over the country and involves Red Cross workers joining with local fire departments and community groups to visit neighborhoods at high risk for fires. Those visits include educating people about fire safety through door-to-door visits and installation of smoke alarms in some of these neighborhoods.

The effort for Bartlesville will begin at Central Fire Station, located at 601 Johnstone Ave., at 9 a.m. on Sept. 23. Firefighters and Red Cross teams will meet and then proceed to begin installing smoke alarms in homes that need them and teach people about what to do in case a fire breaks out in their home. The Baptist Men's Group is also assisting with the project.

"Installing smoke alarms cuts the risk of someone dying from a home fire in half, so we're joining with groups from across our community to install smoke alarms," said Regina Moon, Northeast Oklahoma Chapter executive director. "We also will be teaching people how to be safe from home fire."

Simple Steps to Save Lives

The Red Cross is asking everyone to take two simple steps that can save lives: check their existing smoke alarms and practice fire drills at home,

There are several things families and individuals can do to increase their chances of surviving a fire:

- If someone doesn't have smoke alarms, install them. At a minimum, put one on every level of the home, inside bedrooms and outside sleeping areas. Local building codes vary and there may be additional requirements where someone lives.
- If someone does have alarms, test them today. If they don't work, replace them.
- Make sure that everyone in the family knows how to get out of every room and how to get out of the home in less than two minutes.
- Practice that plan. What's the household's escape time?

To apply for a free smoke detector, contact the Red Cross Bartlesville Chapter at 918-336-2216.