



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Recent Cooking Fires the Highlight Importance of Sprinkler Systems

Newburyport, Massachusetts - March 21, 2014.

On March 16, 2014, a fire began in the kitchen of a private residence, near the University of North Dakota, at approximately 2:40 AM. 21 year old Matthew Heisler, a student at the University of North Dakota and a Lakeville, ND, native, was rescued from the house by his longtime friend, 20 year old Ryan Nelson. Ryan performed CPR on Matthew, while waiting for the arrival of emergency crews. According to reports, Matthew regained a pulse as a result of Ryan's efforts.

Unfortunately, Matthew was unable to recover from the injuries he had sustained; he died on Tuesday morning, March 18, 2014. Matthew was an organ donor and his gift will help the lives of more than sixty people, according to his parents. The house did not have a residential sprinkler system. The fire was ruled to be accidental, being caused by unattended cooking on an electrical stove, according to fire officials. The Center for Campus Fire Safety extends its deepest sympathies to the family and friends of Matthew Heisler, as well as to the University of North Dakota's campus community, for their loss.

In a similar unattended cooking incident at Marist College, NY, on March 19, 2014, at approximately 7:09 PM, the use of sprinklers can be credited with saving lives. The fire was determined to be caused by unattended cooking on



the stove top. Fairview Firefighters were dispatched for an automatic alarm of fire at Marist College Townhouse “J”. While en route, Fairview personnel were updated that there was an active fire in the unit’s kitchen area. Firefighters arrived to find a smoke condition in the apartment with a sprinkler head activated. The fire, which started on the kitchen stove, was limited to the immediate area by the sprinkler system’s activation.

“This is an excellent example of how a sprinkler system in a building can save lives and property,” said Chief Christopher Maeder of the Fairview Fire District. Assisting at the scene were the City of Poughkeepsie Fire Department, New York State Office of Fire Prevention and Control, and Dutchess County Department of Emergency Response. There were no injuries as a result of the Marist College fire. It is anticipated that the building will be able to be reoccupied in the immediate future.

For the full press release from Fairview Fire District, visit:

www.campusfiresafety.org

“The Center for Campus Fire Safety reflects on this tragedy and also wants to remind everyone of the dangers of unattended cooking”, said Paul D. Martin, President of the Center for Campus Fire Safety.

According to data collected by The Center for Campus Fire Safety (The Center) cooking is the leading cause of fire in on and off-campus housing. In addition statistics from the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), state that cooking in the leading cause of all home fires. See the [NFPA’s Fact Sheet](#) for more information.



“The Center for Campus Fire Safety also wants to point out the necessity of fire sprinkler systems”, said Paul D. Martin, President of The Center for Campus Fire Safety. “To have residence halls without fire sprinklers today should be unacceptable to parents” said Martin. Fire Sprinklers protect people and structures. Most people don't realize that 8 out of 10 fire deaths occur at night when everyone is asleep. Fires are also fast; they can go from a tiny flame to total destruction in as little as three minutes. Fire sprinklers can suppress and often extinguish a fire before the fire department arrives, providing additional time to escape.

86 fatal fires have been documented that occurred on a college campus, in Greek housing or in off-campus housing within 3-miles of the campus - claiming a total of 123 victims.

- » 73 fires have occurred in off-campus housing claiming 104 victims
- » 7 fires have occurred in on-campus building or residence halls claiming 9 victims
- » 6 fires have occurred in Greek housing claiming 10 victims

CCFS has been documenting specific campus related fires deaths since Year 2000. Current and more detailed statistics, along with the definition of how we define “campus related fires” are always posted on the website, along with a host of fire safety resources and tips for fire safety professionals as well as students in both universities and off-campus housing. One of the resources includes a daily and ongoing listing of other fire incidents in the higher education arena.

To learn more about CCFS and its programs, visit www.campusfiresafety.org.

For additional information:

Fire Fatality Statistics and Definition:

<http://www.campusfiresafety.org/firefatalitystatistics>

Continual e-news -campus fire & safety:

<http://www.campusfiresafety.org/News>



Campus Fire Safety Resources: <http://www.campusfiresafety.org/resources>

About The Center for Campus Fire Safety (CCFS)

The Center for Campus Fire Safety (CCFS) is a non-profit, member focused organization devoted to reducing the loss of life from fire at our nation's campuses. The mission of The Center for Campus Fire Safety is to serve as an advocate for the promotion of campus fire safety. CCFS serves as the focal point for the efforts of a number of organizations and also as a clearinghouse for information relating to campus fire safety. Visit us at www.campusfiresafety.org for more information.

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