

# Presidential Documents

**Title 3—****Proclamation 7131 of October 2, 1998****The President****Fire Prevention Week, 1998****By the President of the United States of America****A Proclamation**

Fire claims more than 4,000 American lives each year, a tragic loss of life that we can and must prevent. Nearly 80 percent of these deaths occur in the home, where smoke and poisonous gases often kill people long before flames can reach them.

Underestimating fire's deadly speed has cost many Americans their lives. Smoke alarms are one of the most effective safety tools available to ensure sufficient escape time, and research shows that by installing and maintaining working smoke alarms, we can reduce the risk of fire-related death by nearly 50 percent. Another important safety measure is a home fire escape plan, which enables everyone in the household to exit quickly during a fire emergency.

As sponsor of Fire Prevention Week for more than 70 years, the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) has selected "Fire Drills—The Great Escape!" as the theme for this year's Fire Prevention Week. Together with the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the NFPA reminds us to take responsibility for our personal safety and practice our home escape plans. On Wednesday, October 7, 1998, fire departments across America will coordinate home fire drills in support of National Fire Prevention Week. Community fire departments will signal the start of the "Great Escape Fire Drill" by sounding their stations' fire alarms at 6:00 p.m.

As we focus on fire safety this week, let us also pay tribute to the courage and commitment of our Nation's fire and emergency services personnel. These dedicated men and women devote themselves, day in and day out, to protecting our lives and property from the ravages of fire. All America watched in awe this summer as thousands of firefighters from across the Nation battled the wildfires that raged through Florida for so many weeks. Leaving their own homes and families, these heroes put their lives on the line as street by street, house by house, they worked to save the homes of their fellow Americans. It is fitting that on Sunday, October 4, 1998, at the 17th annual National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Service in Emmitsburg, Maryland, our Nation will honor once again the valiant men and women across our country whose commitment to protecting our families and communities from fire cost them their lives.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim October 4 through October 10, 1998, as Fire Prevention Week. I encourage people of the United States to take an active role in fire prevention not only this week, but also throughout the year. I also call upon every citizen to pay tribute to the members of our fire and emergency services who have lost their lives or been injured in service to their communities, and to those men and women who carry on their noble tradition.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this second day of October, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-eight, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-third.

*William Clinton*

[FR Doc. 98-26972

Filed 10-5-98; 8:45 am]

Billing code 3195-01-P