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NEWS RELEASE

John R. Kasich, Governor

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Department of Commerce**

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OHIO DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

STATE FIRE MARSHAL CREATES SMOKE ALARM ADVISORY TASK FORCE

State Fire Marshal Larry Flowers today announced the creation of the Division of State Fire Marshal's Smoke Alarm Advisory Task Force. The task force will make a recommendation to the Division of State Fire Marshal on how citizens can best protect themselves and their property through available smoke alarm technologies.

The Smoke Alarm Advisory Task Force will examine the various research, recommendations and opinions regarding the use and placement of photoelectric and ionization smoke alarms in residential properties.

"The members of the task force were specifically selected for their experience in analyzing and evaluating technical information," said State Fire Marshal Flowers. "Their interest in the issue of home, fire and public safety, along with their high integrity and widely accepted credibility, will provide us with a recommendation of smoke alarm protection for Ohio's homes."

The task force will be chaired by Robert Rielage, former Ohio State Fire Marshal and current fire chief for the City of Wyoming, near Cincinnati. The members of the task force include: Ohio Representative Joseph Uecker; Dr. Gary Smith, the Director of the Center for Injury Research and Policy at Nationwide Children's Hospital; Dr. Lindy Dejarme, a research scientist with Battelle Laboratories; Gregg Costas, a criminal and fire investigator with the Bureau of Criminal Identification and Investigation; Dennis Kovach, an fire protection engineer with American Electric Power; and Jay Troy, a member of the Society for Fire Protection Engineers.

Recent statistics show that as many as 90% of Ohio's fires with fatalities or injuries occur in homes with no smoke alarms, no working smoke alarms or smoke alarms that may not have activated. Additionally, new recommendations by some organizations have suggested the use of one smoke alarm detection technology over the other.

Anyone interested in scheduling testimony or providing data, information or research to the task force should contact the Division of State Fire Marshal at 614-752-8818.

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