



**For Immediate Release**

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## **Twenty One Fire Deaths in 2009**

Twenty-one Alaskans have died from fires in 2009, and there are still nine days left in the year. Traditionally, the occurrence of fire deaths increases during the holiday season and into the end of January; it is especially important to practice fire safety throughout this time. Alcohol usage was confirmed to be a contributing factor in the majority of these fire deaths. Alaska has averaged 21 fire deaths per year for the last 5 years; a rate three times the national average.

### **Here are a few fire safety reminders from the Division of Fire and Life Safety:**

1. Use caution when consuming alcohol or prescription medication and using any heat source such as cigarettes, wood stoves or cooking appliances.
2. Keep matches and lighters away from children.
3. Cook all meals in a safe manner.
4. Keep combustibles three feet away from heat sources.
5. If you must smoke, smoke outside.
6. Dispose of smoking materials in a metal container or deep ashtray.

The Division of Fire and Life Safety reminds you to help keep your family safe by preventing fires in your home. For more information about fire safety, go to [www.akburny.com](http://www.akburny.com) and click on the "Public Education" section.

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