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Saving Lives, Protecting Property

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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New Year Marks Fresh Start for Businesses and Homeowners To Make Fire Safety a Top Priority

January 23, 2007 (Cleveland, OH) -- With the New Year comes a fresh start and a chance for New Year's resolutions. The Fire Equipment Manufacturers' Association (FEMA, The Life Safety Group) encourages business owners, building managers, and homeowners to start the New Year with a resolution that revolves around planning for fire safety. This year, take time to make your office and home as safe as you can, plotting and practicing escape routes and following through on your plan if needed, to prevent tragedy from occurring.

Here are six simple steps to kick off the New Year with safety in mind:

At the Office:

- 1) Plan for Disaster: Have an escape plan and a meeting place designated for all employees. Meet regularly to discuss and practice the proper procedures for a fire in the office, which include calling the fire department first. Keep emergency phone numbers posted in a central location.
- 2) Maintain Fire Protection Equipment: Check inspection tags on all fire extinguishers, standpipe fire hose stations, and pre-engineered fire suppression systems. Make sure equipment is up-to-date and does not show signs of visible damage, such as breakage, leaks, corrosion or dents. If the equipment needs an inspection, call a local fire service professional in your phone book.
- 3) Hold a Fire Safety Training Event: Contact your local fire department to schedule a training session so that employees can learn and practice how to use a fire extinguisher or a fire hose station. Also, direct employees online to free educational sites such as www.fireextinguisher.com, www.rackhosetraining.com, and www.firesystemstraining.org.

At Home:

- 1) Be Cautious with Portable Space Heaters: During the winter months, heating equipment is the leading cause of home fires, according to the National Fire Prevention Association. To prevent fire, place space heaters at least three feet away from anything combustible and never leave space heaters operating when you are not in the room or when you go to bed.
- 2) Keep Fire Extinguishers Handy throughout Your Home: Get training from the fire department on how to use them or visit www.fireextinguisher.com. Make sure you have one on every level and especially one in your kitchen. Make sure smoke alarms also are working properly and replace batteries regularly.
- 3) Inspect Fireplaces and Wood Stoves: Use a sturdy screen when burning fires. Burn only wood and have your chimney connections and flues inspected by a professional and cleaned if necessary prior to the start of every heating season.

The Fire Equipment Manufacturers' Association is a non-profit trade association dedicated to saving lives and protecting property through balanced fire protection education. For more information about FEMA, visit www.femalifesafety.org.

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