**COMING SOON: How Can We Grow Stronger as a Region?**

Did you know that by the year 2040 the five-county region we live in (Anderson, Union, Spartanburg, Greenville, and Pickens Counties) will be the home of more than 1.5 million people? This is a staggering number that has significant implications for our region's growth and development. It's important to consider how we can collaborate and plan together to ensure that our communities continue to thrive.

**State Fire Marshal: Teach children fire safety at an early age**

**NASHVILLE, TN** — Every day, Americans experience the tragedy of a residential fire. According to the U.S. Fire Administration, more than 3,500 Americans die or become seriously injured in fires. One of the primary causes of residential fire deaths and injuries for children under 10 is playing with a heat source, which includes lighters, candles, or matches.

**Curious kids set fires**

Children 14 and under make up 10-15% of all fire deaths. Fifty-two percent of all child fire deaths occur involve those under 5. Those children are especially vulnerable because they are small, uncoordinated, and do not understand the dangers associated with fire.

According to the U.S. Fire Administration, the most common cause of residential fire deaths and injuries for children under 10 is playing with a heat source, which includes lighters, candles, or matches.

**“We urge parents to teach children at an early age about the dangers of playing with fire, to prevent child injuries, fires, and fire deaths”**

At home, children often play with fire in their rooms, in closets and other storage areas. It’s important to educate children about the dangers of fire and teach them to be safe.

Teach children not to play with fire or other flammable materials. Set up a childproofing plan that includes non-flammable materials and safe storage areas for flammable items. It’s also important to teach children to never enter a burning home.

**“Children might be playing with fire without knowing it”**

It’s important to teach children to be aware of the dangers of fire and to seek help if they see something that could be a potential fire hazard. It’s also important to teach children to never enter a burning home.

Many children might be playing with fire without knowing it. As parents, it’s important to teach children the dangers of fire and to seek help if they see something that could be a potential fire hazard. It’s also important to teach children to never enter a burning home.