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Contact: Patricia Klinger
Joe Delcambre
Tel.: (202) 366-4831

U.S. DOT Supports National Fire Prevention Week with Hazardous Materials Safety Guidance

Travelers can minimize the fire safety hazards posed by aerosols, ammunition, lighters, lighter fluid, matches, and fireworks by reading the tips on the expanded "SafeTravel" website of the U.S. Department of Transportation's Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA).

A variety of consumer-use hazardous materials are only safe for transportation when packed and handled properly. PHMSA is bringing this message to travelers through a coordinated media and stakeholder outreach campaign called SafeTravel, which aims to raise public fire safety awareness nationwide. PHMSA's SafeTravel tips are available on the Web at <http://SafeTravel.dot.gov>.

Today, Americans increasingly travel with a wide variety of consumer-use hazardous materials and battery-powered devices like portable telephones, computers, cameras, camcorders, entertainment devices, and medical equipment. Batteries are becoming more and more powerful, using varied technologies to provide longer life for the devices carried by the ordinary traveler.

"Our agency is committed to strengthening our efforts to promote the necessary steps to take when traveling with hazardous materials and battery-powered devices. Being responsible and checking your batteries, whether in your home smoke detector or when you travel, is an excellent way to prevent fires and protect public safety," stated PHMSA Chief Safety Officer Stacey Gerard.

Working with a broad coalition of other government agencies, individual companies, trade associations, and stakeholders, PHMSA developed a variety of educational SafeTravel materials to increase hazardous materials and battery safety public awareness. Printed guides explain safe travel with batteries and list safety tips to minimize the risk of fires caused by batteries.

PHMSA revised its SafeTravel website in support of the National Fire Protection Association's Fire Prevention Week efforts, Oct. 7-13. For more hazardous materials and battery safety information, visit <http://SafeTravel.dot.gov> or call PHMSA's Hazardous Materials Info-Line at 1-800-467-4922.

Since 1925, the President of the United States has signed a proclamation declaring a national observance for Fire Prevention Week. Fire Prevention Week is the longest running public health and safety observance on record. It was established to commemorate the Great Chicago Fire of 1871 that killed more than 250 people.

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