

Alabama's health

A publication of the Alabama Department of Public Health

State Goes Red For Women to Raise Awareness About Women's Risk of Heart Disease

Red Dress pins and red attire were seen in abundance on Feb. 2 when the department joined in partnership with the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association to celebrate **Go Red For Women Day**, a national campaign to improve women's heart health by raising awareness about women and heart disease.

Female employees at county health departments were offered pins, **Go Red for Women** brochures, wallet cards, posters and ballot-style boxes with sign-up cards urging women to "Join the Movement." The state's 32 nurse practitioners were sent toolkits for use with their patients and to give to local physicians and health care providers.



The bureaus of Health Promotion and Chronic Disease and Professional and Support Services, specifically the Cardiovascular Health Branch, the Office of Minority Health, and the Office of Women's Health, worked with other partners to facilitate the statewide observance. The Alabama Capitol building was illuminated in red on the night of Feb. 1.

At the campaign kickoff on Feb. 2, First Lady Patsy Riley joined with the Alabama Department of Public Health, the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association and Baptist Health in celebrating the day. Montgomery's celebration, held at the Alabama Power Company Auditorium of the

*A balloon release kicked off the Go Red
for Women Day in Alabama.*

continued on page 6

Retirees

The following employees have retired recently:

January

Lucille Jordan – Dallas County Health Department
Cherie Williams – Elmore County Health Department

February

Donald Pugh – Public Health Area III



Lois Pugh, registry supervisor for the Division of Tuberculosis Control, retired March 1. Virginia Johns, deputy director of the Bureau of Disease Control and Prevention, and Scott Jones, interim director of the TB Control Division, are shown presenting a retirement certificate to Ms. Pugh who has served almost 30 years in the division. During Ms. Pugh's tenure, the annual incidence of TB has declined from 704 cases in 1977 to a record low of 196 cases in 2006. When she learned that the program had "broken through" the 200-plus cases per year barrier, she smiled and said she had hoped to see that day before retirement. She has been credited as "a key player in protecting Alabama's health."

Fast Facts for Births

Oldest Father: 75

Youngest Father: 14

Oldest Mother: 57

Youngest Mother: 12

Largest Live Birth: 12 pounds, 10 ounces

*Highest Live Birth Order:
13 (12 liveborn brothers and sisters)*

*Day On Which Most Births Occurred:
Nov. 21 (259 births)*

*Day On Which Fewest Births Occurred:
Dec. 25 (67 births)*

From the Center for Health Statistics.

For further information call (334) 206-5429.

Breastfeeding Facts

Did you know....

- Breastfeeding mothers spend less time and money on visits to the doctor?
- Breastfed babies have less risk of asthma, allergies, diabetes and pneumonia?
- Mothers who return to work or school can still breastfeed?

Alabama Department of Public Health Mission

To serve the people of Alabama by assuring conditions in which they can be healthy.

Value Statement

The purpose of the Alabama Department of Public Health is to provide caring, high quality and professional services for the improvement and protection of the public's health through disease prevention and the assurance of public health services to resident and transient populations of the state regardless of social circumstances or the ability to pay.

The Department of Public Health works closely with the community to preserve and protect the public's health and to provide caring quality services.

Alabama's Health

Alabama's Health is an official publication of the Alabama Department of Public Health, Bureau of Health Promotion and Chronic Disease. If you would like to receive the publication or wish to submit information for future articles, please telephone requests to (334) 206-5300. Articles may be reprinted provided credit is given to the Alabama Department of Public Health. The department's Web site is <http://www.adph.org>.

Donald E. Williamson, M.D. State Health Officer
Jim McVay, Dr. P. A. Director, Bureau of Health Promotion and Chronic Disease
Arrol Sheehan, M.A. Editor
Takenya S. Taylor, J.D. Contributing Editor
Noelle Ahmann Graphic Designer



Lives to Be Touched, Families Helped by Record-Setting State Combined Campaign

The 2006 State Combined Campaign was the best in SCC history with more than \$778,584 pledged to Alabama's charities and charities serving the needy overseas, according to campaign co-chairs Phyllis Kennedy of the Department of Industrial Relations and Joe McInnes of the Alabama Department of Transportation. Records were broken both in the amount raised and in the number of state employees who participated.

"The Department's exceptional generosity will mean so much to the many worthy charitable organizations supported by the campaign," the co-chairs wrote in a letter to State Health Officer Dr. Donald Williamson.

The letter further stated, "The success of this campaign can be traced directly to the support it received from your leadership, as well as the leadership and hard work of your campaign coordinator, co-coordinator, and keyworkers. This was evident in the Alabama Department of Public Health achieving 135.90 percent of goal. This achievement marks the department as one of the top giving organizations in the campaign. Participation was the theme and key to this year's success, resulting in 28.49 percent of your employees giving. You and your coordinators, Reginald Strickland, Winona Lawson, and Joan Styres, are to be commended for your caring spirit and dedicated efforts."

In an e-mailed message sent to employees statewide, Dr. Williamson said, "I extend my sincere gratitude to all who participated. I thank all who helped make the 2006 campaign so successful. I especially thank all the campaign coordinators and keyworkers for their efforts."



Shown with the department's Gold Award from the 2006 State Combined Campaign are Dr. Donald Williamson, state health officer; and coordinators from the Center for Health Statistics, left to right, Joan Styres, Reginald Strickland and Winona Lawson.

March 2007

Center for Health Statistics Employees Receive Commendations

Health department employees who are listed here have received letters of commendation recently. To recognize other employees, please send letters through your supervisors or the state health officer to *Alabama's Health*.

Linda Bolding

from Paula Hendrickson
Carmichael, Calif.
Bessie M. McCorvey
Pensacola, Fla.
Gertrude Robinson
Ontario, Calif.

Carmen Butler

from Doneyce Benson
Gadsden, Ala.

Elizabeth Gordon

from Anne C. Sewell
Montgomery, Ala.

Winona Lawson

Donna Little
Reginald Strickland
Joan Styres

from Joe McInnes and Phyllis Kennedy
Montgomery, Ala.

Theresa Mulkey

from Delores Rivers Martin
Birmingham, Ala.
John Wynn
Orlando, Fla.

Kathie Peters

from Camila Damata
Brazil

County Health Departments Set Records in WIC Client Service

The Alabama WIC Program set a record this year by achieving the highest caseload ever of 127,756 in 2006.

Congratulations for a job well done!

Thanks go to all county and area health department staff who worked hard to make this happen. Your dedication to the program and our clients is appreciated.

Kudos to the counties and all involved!



Steps River Region Brings American Idol to Montgomery Students

Elementary, middle and high school students in three Montgomery Public Schools were treated to a surprise visit from 2003 American Idol winner Ruben Studdard. The Feb. 20 appearance was sponsored by the Steps to a Healthier Alabama River Region to promote healthy living choices for young people.

The Birmingham native told his own story of being active in sports in childhood and through his early college years at Alabama A&M University where he attended on a football scholarship. Once he switched to a choral scholarship after his sophomore year he stopped playing football. After dropping workouts from his routine, his weight spiraled out of control and he put on 100 pounds between college and his American Idol competition.

“As you get older, getting healthy is very important,” Studdard told the students. A member of Studdard’s immediate family has been diagnosed with Type 2 diabetes recently, so he especially wants to continue his regimen which has resulted in a near-100 pound weight loss since July and includes regular workouts at a gym.

Felecia Salary Barrow, Steps school health coordinator with the Montgomery Area Community Wellness Coalition, was instrumental in making arrangements for Studdard’s appearance. She explained, “In addition to many other evidence-based interventions being implemented in the schools, Steps has introduced the Healthy Steps Challenge (HSC), which involves increasing physical activity through organized exercise among school faculty and students. Each school participating in the HSC is also participating in Scale Back Alabama using the program as a weight loss component.”

Students at all three of the schools were enthusiastic with his appearance, which included a brief performance of a song from his latest album.

Heidi Hataway, program manager for Steps to a Healthier Alabama, explained, “The Steps initiative works to reduce the burden of diabetes, obesity and asthma and risk factors including poor nutrition, physical inactivity, tobacco use and exposure through funding of community-based interventions in two specific regions of the state.”

The River Region program is organized by the Montgomery Area Community Wellness Coalition and includes the counties of Autauga, Elmore, Lowndes, Macon and Montgomery. The Steps Southeastern Alabama Region program, led by the Charles Henderson Child Health Care Center, includes Barbour and Pike counties.



Healthier lifestyles was the message Ruben Studdard conveyed to an assembly of students at Capitol Heights Junior High School in Montgomery.

Go Red, continued from page 1....

Department of Archives and History, began with a welcome from Dr. Thomas Miller, Assistant State Health Officer for Personal and Community Health.

Mrs. Riley delivered a heart-felt presentation to the largely female audience. Dr. Wynne Crawford, cardiologist, discussed her personal experiences and urged women to assess their risks and take action to adopt heart healthy behaviors. Heart disease survivor Jill Crowley, an American Heart Association volunteer, freely shared her story of how she survived a heart attack that occurred when she was in her forties and asked women not to follow her example.

The celebration also included a release of red balloons, an address by Miss Indian Alabama Megan Young and a reception featuring heart healthy food choices.

One in three women has some form of cardiovascular disease. Cardiovascular diseases claim the lives of over 480,000 American females each year, which is about one per minute. Of the females who die each year, 53 percent die from cardiovascular disease as compared to 46 percent of men and about 35,000



Dr. Wynne Crawford points out that women need to develop a personal health care plan that matches their needs.

more females than males die from a stroke. Yet most women do not consider themselves at risk of getting heart disease. In fact, only 13 percent of women list cardiovascular disease as their greatest health risk.

Likewise, cardiovascular disease is the leading cause of death for Alabama women. The department's Center for Health Statistics reported that 6,655 Alabama females died in 2005 as a result of heart disease and 1,812 female deaths were caused by stroke (cerebrovascular disease). The death rate for cardiovascular disease is 283.7 and the death rate for stroke is 77.2 per 100,000 females.

Too few women realize that cardiovascular disease is their leading cause of death and so do not take action to prevent it. Risk factors are high blood pressure, smoking, elevated cholesterol, physical inactivity, overweight/obesity and diabetes. High blood pressure is a more prevalent cause of death in women than in men, and physical inactivity is more common among women than men.



First Lady Patsy Riley and Miss Indian Alabama Megan Young are among the many supporters of the Go Red for Women Campaign who attended the kickoff event.

Go Red, continued from page 6....

The **Go Red For Women** program began in February 2004 to raise awareness that heart disease is women's No. 1 killer. **Go Red For Women** encourages women to improve their heart health while taking action to fight women's heart disease. Suggested actions include the following:

The Go Red Heart CheckUp, an online, personal heart disease risk assessment for women, is available at GoRedForWomen.org. Women are encouraged to take the assessment and to bring the easily completed printout to their health care provider to develop a personal plan that matches their needs. Women should:

- Know your numbers. Track blood pressure, cholesterol, glucose and weight and keep them in a healthy range.
- Incorporate physical activity in daily routines.
- Eat more fruits and vegetables daily.

In February 2004 the American Heart Association launched **Go Red For Women** as an extension of a 1997 awareness campaign named "Take Wellness To Heart." The **Go Red For Women** movement drives home to women the message that heart disease is their leading cause of death.

Additional information is available at 1-888-MY-HEART (1-888-694-3278), by visiting GoRedForWomen.org, or at the Alabama Department of Public Health Web site at www.adph.org/cvh/



Jackson County Health Department employees in Scottsboro pose on "Wear Red Day."

March 2007

Some County Go Red Activities

CLAY - Diane L Cooper, R.N., reports that the department participated in a health fair at Clay County Hospital. Staff enjoyed distributing the Go Red For Women materials and speaking to and informing citizens of the importance of reducing their risk of heart attack and stroke.

COVINGTON - Shirley Scofield, R.N., said on Feb. 2 employees wore red to support the program, decorated the bulletin board in the clinic waiting room to promote the program, served a red heart cake and cookies at break for the employees, and are wearing Red Dress pins, and handing them out to patients along with heart-related literature during February.

JACKSON - Nancy Hodges, R.N., stated that staff distributed American Heart Association material which included pamphlets, wallet cards, leaflets to patients and coworkers. While assessing clinic histories staff talked about "healthy hearts" and gave the patients Red Dress pins during February. To encourage women to know their heart attack risks, an article was sent to the local newspaper. The nurse practitioner's toolkits were distributed to four local doctors' offices. Furthermore, staff members have stressed the importance of good nutrition to patients, and employees are participating in the Scale Back Alabama Program. The employees meet each Thursday at lunch. While they eat a healthy meal, the public health nutritionist provides good advice and encouragement. Several employees have taken the heart checkup online. Where protocol does not permit red in the dress code, the remainder of the employees wore the Red Dress pins.

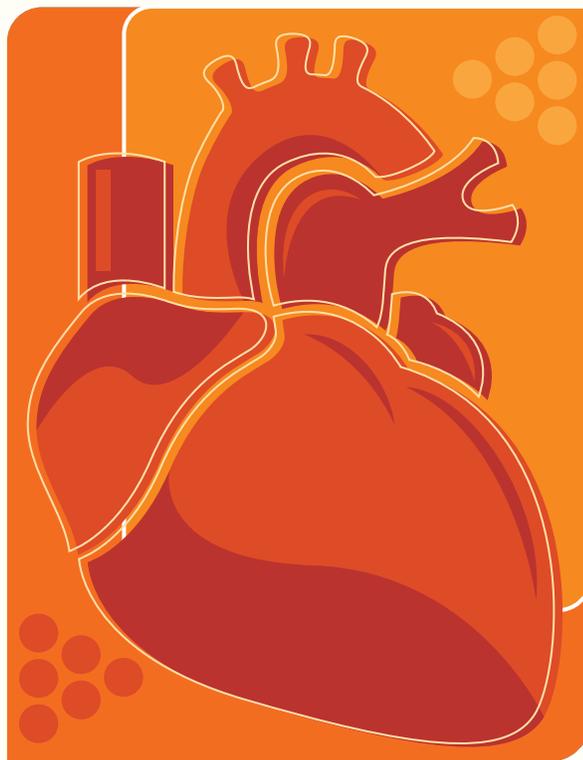
LAWRENCE - Cathy Sanderson, R.N., reports that all female employees were given a pin, booklet, card and encouraged to go on the Web site and take the heart checkup. This included all life care, home health and environmental health employees. Male employees were given this information and encouraged to share them with the women in their lives. A display was placed in the front lobby and the remaining handouts are being given to the patients. Adult female patients in the clinics are being given the remaining pins. Employees were encouraged to wear red on Feb. 2 if permitted by their dress code and all were encouraged to wear the red pin or red lipstick. Copies of heart attack warning signs were placed on the display

continued on page 8

Go Red, continued from page 7...

tables along with copies of the other informational facts. Two teams of five women currently are enrolled in the Scale Back Alabama weight loss program, and all have lost weight recently. They are being given prizes for the top losers each week as an incentive for keeping heart healthy. Several have started exercise plans and one is attempting to stop smoking due to the recent information she has received.

MADISON - Mildred Parker, R.N., reports Go Red was a huge success in Madison County. Staff placed packets which included a Go Red pin, appointment card, heart attack warning signs for women leaflet, Go Red pamphlet, and a dark chocolate mint in all patient care areas and sat up a display in the security office, which is visible as soon as one enters the building. Several staff members wore an article of red clothing, as did many of the clients. Many members of the public were already aware of the movement. All female clients and male clients with a significant other female were asked to visit www.GoRedForWomen.org and take the heart checkup.



Heart Attack Warning Signs for Women

Some heart attacks are sudden and intense, but most of them start slowly, with mild pain or discomfort. Often the people affected aren't sure what's wrong and wait too long before getting help. Here are some of the signs that can mean a heart attack is happening:

AS WITH MEN, WOMEN'S MOST COMMON HEART ATTACK SYMPTOM IS CHEST PAIN OR DISCOMFORT. BUT WOMEN ARE SOMEWHAT MORE LIKELY THAN MEN TO EXPERIENCE SOME OF THE OTHER COMMON SYMPTOMS:

CHEST DISCOMFORT. Most heart attacks involve discomfort in the center of the chest that lasts more than a few minutes, or that goes away and comes back. It can feel like uncomfortable pressure, squeezing, fullness or pain.

DISCOMFORT IN OTHER AREAS OF THE UPPER BODY. Symptoms can include pain or discomfort in one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw or stomach.

SHORTNESS OF BREATH. This feeling may occur with or without chest discomfort.

OTHER SIGNS: These may include breaking out in a cold sweat, nausea or vomiting, lightheadedness, and back or jaw pain.

If you or someone you are with has chest discomfort, especially with one or more of the other signs, don't wait longer than five minutes before calling for help. Call 9-1-1.

Calling 9-1-1 is almost always the fastest way to get lifesaving treatment. Emergency medical services (EMS) staff can begin treatment when they arrive — up to an hour sooner than if someone gets to the hospital by car. The staff members are also trained to revive someone whose heart has stopped. And you will get treated faster in the hospital if you arrive by ambulance.

If you're the one having symptoms, and you can't access emergency medical services (EMS), have someone drive you to the hospital right away. Don't drive yourself, unless you have absolutely no other option.



Sandy Jackson Presented 2006 County Clerical Excellence Award

Whether it's staying late to help a patient fill out a Medicaid application or to help a WIC mother obtain special formula for her infant, clinic clerk Sandy Jackson of the Lawrence County Health Department in Moulton makes sure the job gets done and then some.

For demonstrating "vision, innovation and creativity in the performance of her job duties," Ms. Jackson was recognized as the department's 2006 County Clerical Excellence Award winner. In the documentation supporting Ms. Jackson's nomination, supervisors described her as a self-starter and a self-motivator.



Shown are Area Clerical Director Cindy Daigre, Sandy Jackson of Lawrence County, and Area Administrator Judy Smith of Public Health Area 2.

While in the last trimester of pregnancy Ms. Jackson helped train three new clerks in an 8-week period. She wrote out a detailed, step-by-step process of her job duties for others to use during her maternity leave. Her traits helped her become the award nominee for Public Health Area II.

This is the second year the statewide award has been presented. Its purpose is twofold: first, to recognize outstanding achievement each year by department staff working in clerical classifications at the county level; and second, to provide other employees working in clerical classifications a standard of excellence.

The award program is multi-tiered, with each area team selecting an Area Clerical Excellence Award recipient. Those honorees were recognized during area staff meetings earlier this year. Nominees for the state award were submitted and Ms. Jackson was chosen to receive the recognition which includes a \$100 award and a traveling plaque. The monetary award is donated by the area clerical directors, the state clerical director and the office manager of the Bureau of Professional and Support Services.

Patty Leonard of the DeKalb County Health Department in Public Health Area V was the first County Clerical Excellence Award recipient.

Public Health Programs Are Involved in Media Outreach

Each month dedicated staff appear on WAKA's Midday News program's health segment in Montgomery to discuss relevant health issues and to answer calls from the public. To show our appreciation, *Alabama's Health* would like to recognize these staff members who took the time to participate in this valuable service the past several months.

September's guest was **Ruth Wilson**, health educator with the Cardiovascular Health Branch of the Bureau of Health Promotion and Chronic Disease. Ms. Wilson spoke about stroke signs, symptoms and risk factors. In November, **Charlene Grace**, health projects coordinator in the Cancer Control Program, BHPCD, discussed lung cancer and its risk factors. And, in December **Anthony Merriweather**, HIV/AIDS surveillance director in the HIV/AIDS Division, helped create awareness of World AIDS

Day and discussed the state of HIV/AIDS in Alabama.

Heidi Hataway, director of the STEPS Branch of BHPCD, started the new year by telling Alabamians how to eat healthier and become more physically fit. Then in February **Mim Gaines**, director of the Nutrition and Physical Activity Division, Bureau of Professional and Support Services, discussed the Scale Back Alabama campaign sponsored by the department, the Alabama Hospital Association and Barber Dairy. Teams of three to five people are competing for a grand prize of \$5,000 donated by Barber's. The winners will be announced on April 2.

If you would like to appear on WAKA's Midday News program, please contact Takenya Taylor at (334) 206-7026, or by e-mail at ttaylor@adph.state.al.us.

Too Many Alabamians Die Because of Faulty Heating Equipment

Although winter is almost over, did you also know that we are still in the quarter of year when most home fires occur?

Heating fires are the second leading cause of residential fire deaths in Alabama and in the United States. In 2003, 8 percent of home fire deaths nationally were attributed to heating equipment. In Alabama, 14 percent of home fire deaths were caused by heating equipment during the same year. In both instances, the most common cause of heating fires was fixed and/or portable space heaters.

According to a 2003 report from the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), heating equipment was involved in an estimated 53,200 reported U.S. home structure fires. These fires resulted in 260 civilian deaths

and 1,260 civilian injuries. In terms of economic loss, heating fires caused \$494 million in direct property damage.

Heating fires peak during the months of January through March, when outside temperatures are typically coldest. Follow the tips below to keep your family safe.

- Keep combustible materials, such as clothing or curtains, at least three feet from any heating source.
- When buying a new space heater, or any heating equipment, make sure it carries the mark of an independent testing laboratory.
- Have chimneys and fire places cleaned annually.
- Use only dry, seasoned wood in fireplaces to avoid the build-up of creosote, which is highly flammable. Use only paper or

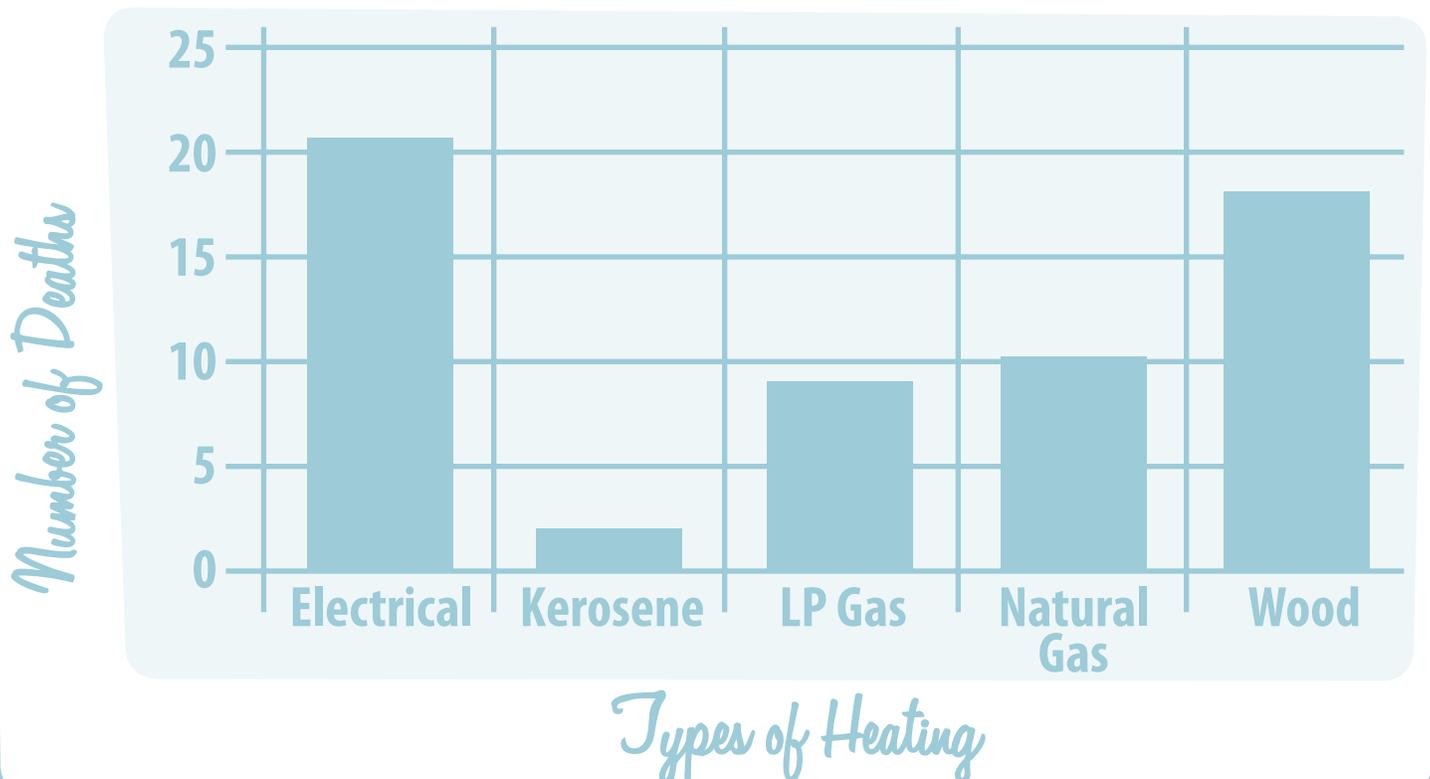
kindling wood, not a flammable liquid, to start the fire. Do not use artificial logs in wood stoves.

- Make sure your fireplace has a sturdy screen to prevent sparks from flying into the room. Allow fireplace and woodstove ashes to cool before disposing in a metal container.
- Turn off space heaters and extinguish wood fires when you leave your home or when you go to bed.
- Do not use your oven to heat your home.
- Install smoke alarms within ten feet of the bedroom area and test them monthly.

To learn more about home fire safety, visit the ADPH Web site at www.adph.org/injuryprevention.

By AMANDA MARTIN

Alabama Fire Deaths Caused by Heating Equipment 2001-2005



Preparing for Retirement – Financial Planning with Feed the Pig

The American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA) in conjunction with the Advertising Council created a Web site, www.feedthepig.org, to educate Americans about how financial issues affect their lives. The goal of the campaign is to encourage the 40 million Americans age 25 to 34 to take control of their finances. The campaign, Feed the Pig, is a new component of the 360 Degrees of Financial Literacy effort encouraging people to take small steps today to build a solid financial tomorrow. It features a Web site, www.360financialliteracy.org, offering free tools and resources to help Americans manage their finances through every stage of life.

The American Institute of Certified Public Accountants is the national professional association of CPAs, with approximately 330,000 members in business, industry, public practice, government and education. The AICPA sets the ethical standards for the profession and the auditing standards for private companies, non-profit groups, and federal, state and local governments.

The Advertising Council has produced thousands of PSA campaigns addressing the most pressing social issues of the day. The Ad Council aims to foster tremendous positive change by raising awareness, inspiring action and saving lives.

On the Feed the Pig Web site you will find:

- Tips on saving
- Articles on financial planning and how to save more money
- Calculators for savings and credit card payoff
- Tips for every stage of life
- Free weekly e-mail savings tip

On the 360 Degrees of Financial Literacy Web site you will find these gems:

- Tips for any stage of life
- Financial topics for every situation
- Financial guidance book
- Financial planning and saving for women
- You can ask them questions via e-mail
- Links to other sites on financial literacy

Money should not drive your future. But neither should debt. It is time for you to take control. Get what you deserve. Not just today - your whole life. Just remember: small changes add up. Take steps to start saving today and you will build a solid financial future tomorrow.

Prepared by the Communications staff of the Retirement Systems of Alabama. To have your questions answered in "Preparing for Retirement", please address them to:

Mike Pegues, Communications
Retirement Systems of Alabama
P.O. Box 302150
Montgomery, Ala. 36130-2150
www.rsa.state.al.us





Calendar of Events

March 22  Satellite Conf & Web Cast
**Psychology of Terrorism and Psychological
Counterterrorism: Seven Things You Should
Know, 12 noon-1:30 p.m.**
For more information contact Video Communications, (334) 206-5618.

March 27  Satellite Conf & Web Cast
**Public Health Preparedness for Explosions
and Blast Injuries, 12 noon-1:30 p.m.**
For more information contact Video Communications, (334) 206-5618.

April 2-8
**National Public Health Week. This year's
theme is "Take the First Step! Preparedness
and Public Health Threats."**
For more information visit <http://www.apha.org/nphw>
or e-mail NPHW@apha.org.

April 11  Satellite Conf & Web Cast
**Home Health Aides and
Attendants, 2-4 p.m.**
For more information contact Debbie Buchanan, (334) 206-5711.

April 18  Satellite Conf & Web Cast
**Preventing Sexual Coercion Among
Adolescents (Title X Family Planning
Training), 2-4 p.m.**
For more information contact Annie Vosel, (334) 206-2959.

**April 23-29
Cover the Uninsured Week**

May 3  Satellite Conf & Web Cast
**ADPH Staff Meeting with
Dr. Williamson, 3-4 p.m.**
For more information contact Video Communications, (334) 206-5618.

May 16  Satellite Conf & Web Cast
**Home Health Aides and
Attendants, 2-4 p.m.**
For more information contact Debbie Buchanan, (334) 206-5711.

May 16-18
**Public Health Professional Leadership Day and Alabama Public
Health Association 51st Annual Health Education Conference/
Alabama Environmental Health Association Conference,
Riverview Plaza Hotel, Mobile. The deadline for registering for
the conference is April 27. Online registration is a [https://www.
adph.org/extranet/Forms/Form.asp?formID=436](https://www.adph.org/extranet/Forms/Form.asp?formID=436).**

June 20  Satellite Conf & Web Cast
Title X Family Planning Training, 2-4 p.m.
For more information contact Annie Vosel, (334) 206-2959.