

UL VIDEO NEWS RELEASE

August 17, 2004

Fall is the time of year when students start college. It is also the time of year when parents and high school seniors across the country start to look at colleges and universities. Is fire safety one of the things they are looking at when sizing up a school? Probably not, and we need to help them to start thinking about it!

On August 17 Underwriters Laboratories will distribute its second annual Video News Release (VNR) on campus fire safety to media outlets nationwide. This will be a great opportunity for you to work with your local television station and speak with them about campus fire safety.

In 2003, UL released its first campus fire safety VNR and it was a resounding success. It aired 157 times in 77 markets, with an estimated audience of more than 6 million viewers across the United States. In addition, UL spokespeople appeared on 21 news shows in cities such as Chicago, Philadelphia, San Francisco, Sacramento, Atlanta, St. Louis, Dallas, and Houston.

The 2004 VNR focuses on what parents should look for when selecting a fire-safe school. It features Gail Minger, who lost her son in a tragic arson fire at Murray State University in Kentucky in 1998. Since that time, Mrs. Minger has become a tireless advocate for campus fire safety, and has been successful in getting landmark legislation passed in Kentucky focusing on campus fire safety.

Included is a list of questions that parents should ask about fire safety at any college or university prepared by the Center for Campus Fire Safety. Please feel free to use these questions in working with your local media (please give credit to the Center if you do use these questions).

Some other facts that you might want to include:

Annually, there are an average of 1,500 fires in residence halls and Greek housing causing over \$9 million in damage each year.

In the past 20 years, 43 students have died in Greek and residence hall fires.

The leading cause of fires is arson, followed by cooking and smoking. This does not include the untold number of fires that occur in off campus housing, which is where the greatest risk lies according to a number of fire officials.

The Center for Campus Fire Safety reports that since January 2000, an additional 51 students have died in off-campus fires, which represents over 80% of the fatalities in student housing.

- ✚ According to the U.S. Department of Education, approximately 2/3 of the students in this country live off campus.
- ✚ According to the Center for Campus Fire Safety, the common thread in off campus fires includes:

- Lack of automatic fire sprinkler systems
- Missing or disabled smoke alarms
- Careless disposal of smoking materials
- Alcohol

Resources for additional information about campus fire safety:

Center for Campus Fire Safety
www.campusfire.org

Campus Firewatch
www.campus-firewatch.com

National Electrical Manufacturers Association
www.nema.org

National Fire Sprinkler Association
www.nfsa.org

SimplexGrinnell
www.simplexgrinnell.com

Underwriters Laboratories
www.ul.com

For specific information regarding the release of the VNR and information on how television stations in your area can download it, please contact:

Joe Hirschmugl
Media Relations Specialist
Underwriters Laboratories Inc.
Joseph.F.Hirschmugle@us.ul.com
(847) 664-1508