

Area Firefighter Weighs in on State Novelty Lighter Ban

Written by Adam Hicks
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Last week, High Country Radio reported that state lawmakers voted to ban the selling of novelty lighters in North Carolina. We were able to catch up with an area firefighter and get his take on the issue.

Matthew Crawford, who serves as the Fire Prevention Specialist for the Boone Fire Department, said one state fire marshal official said novelty lighters are just not a good idea.

Crawford said, "We had several cases in North Carolina where children were playing with novelty lighters and had actually caused house fires."

Crawford also said the biggest problem with novelty lighters is that kids, and sometimes adults often mistake them for toys. He explained, "A fireman was walking through a grocery store one day and a mom and a child were in line. The child asked the mom if they could have it. The mom said, 'sure.' She had no idea it was a lighter. That's when we said we have an issue with it."

Crawford said the North Carolina Office of the State Fire Marshal has spearheaded the effort to get these novelty lighters banned.

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Crawford explained this new ban goes into effect on October 1, 2009. Crawford added that October is Fire Prevention Month.