***Sample Letter to the Editor – Multigenerational Households***

*Use the letter to the editor below for submission to your local newspaper. Add your name as the author and send it to your local newspaper. You’ll be helping residents of your community learn what they can do to make their home safer from fire.*

**(MONTH, DATE, YEAR)**

Letters to the Editor

**(NEWSPAPER)**

**(ADDRESS)**

**(CITY, STATE, ZIP, POSTAL CODE)**

To the Editor:

Multigenerational households are becoming more common. This living arrangement allows families of different generations to come together to face many challenges–raising children, caring for older adults, and managing housing costs, job loss, and single parenting.

There are a number of examples here in **(TOWN/CITY)** of residents benefiting from the support and security of living with several generations under one roof. Home is a sanctuary for these families. But let’s not forget that home is the place where people are at greatest risk of fire.

According to the nonprofit National Fire Protection Association’s (NFPA) data, there are roughly 360,000 home fires every year in the United States, and roughly 2,500 people die in these home fires.

NFPA and the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) urge members of multigenerational households to work together to ensure everyone follows fire safety practices.

* Make sure your home has smoke alarms. You need a smoke alarm on every level, inside each sleeping room, and outside each separate sleeping area. Interconnect the alarms so when one sounds, they all sound.
* Test your alarms at least once a month. Press each test button to make sure it is working.
* Practice your fire drill. Plan your home escape. Share the plan with everyone in the family and guests.
* The plan should include two ways out of every room and an outside family meeting place.
* Smoke alarms may not wake up children. Older adults may not hear the smoke alarm. Assign someone to help children, older adults and people with disabilities escape.
* Make sure your home has bright lighting in stairways to prevent falls during a fire drill.
* Remove clutter to prevent trips and falls and allow for a quick escape.
* Install handrails along the full length of both sides of the stairs.
* If there is a fire, get outside quickly and stay outside. Then call 9-1-1.
* If you can’t get outside call 9-1-1. Let the fire department know you can’t get outside. Wave a light-colored cloth or a flashlight from the window.
* If there is smoke, use your second way out. If you must escape through smoke, get low and go under the smoke.

Time and again, the **(YOUR TOWN/CITY)** Fire Department has witnessed the life-saving impact of working smoke alarms and escape planning.

For more fire safety information, visit nfpa.org/public-education, cpsc.gov/safety-education or **(YOUR LOCAL FIRE DEPARTMENT WEB SITE).**

**(YOUR NAME, TITLE)**