

NEWS RELEASE

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State Rep. Cheryl Rivera and Springfield Fire Department Kick Off Carbon Monoxide (CO) Awareness Campaign In Preparation for New Law Deadline

Department Provides 300 Donated CO Alarms to Homes With no Working Alarms as Part of Campaign Reminding Area Residents to Comply with New State Law by March 31

SPRINGFIELD, Mass. (March 7, 2006) – State Representative Cheryl A. Rivera (D-Springfield) and the Springfield Fire Department kicked off a campaign today to remind Springfield area residents that March 31 is the compliance deadline for Nicole’s Law, a newly passed law requiring carbon monoxide (CO) alarms in all residences. As part of the campaign kickoff, First Alert[®] donated 300 CO alarms to the fire department to benefit local families in need.

Addressing the importance of this new CO legislation, Springfield Fire Commissioner Gary G. Cassanelli urged community members to be aware of the dangers posed by carbon monoxide and to take steps to protect the ones they love from this silent killer.

“Carbon monoxide poisoning is preventable, and this donation from First Alert will help many families in our area who might not otherwise be able to afford an alarm,” he said. “In addition to making sure that your fuel-burning appliances are inspected each year, having an early warning to let you know that carbon monoxide is present is the best way to avoid tragedy and illness. And that’s exactly why the state of Massachusetts will require all homes to have CO alarms by March 31.”

Carbon monoxide is invisible and odorless. It can come from a malfunctioning fuel-burning appliance such as a furnace, water heater, gas oven or range, blocked flue or vent or a

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car left running in an attached garage. It is a byproduct of incomplete combustion of wood, coal, charcoal, gasoline, kerosene, natural gas or oil. CO is dangerous because it robs blood of oxygen, suffocating the person from the inside out in as little as 15 minutes. Nationwide research from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reveals more than 15,000 Americans get sick from accidental, non-fire related exposure to carbon monoxide (CO) every year, and another 500 die.

“We commend Representative Rivera and the Springfield Fire Department’s efforts to educate residents on the dangers of carbon monoxide and to continue taking steps to ensure everyone in this state is protected,” said Mark Colello, senior vice president and general manager at BRK Brands, Inc., the manufacturer of First Alert branded home safety products. “We hope this alarm donation will help make an immediate impact in this community and will serve as a reminder to everyone that there is an effective and simple way to protect families from the threat of carbon monoxide.”

Massachusetts’ Nicole’s Law was inspired by the January 2005 accidental death of seven-year-old Nicole Garofalo from Plymouth, whose home filled with CO as a result of a snow drift blocking an exhaust vent for the home’s propane-fired boiler. For details on the law and the types of CO alarms that comply with the law’s regulations, visit www.mass.gov/dfs/osfm/pubed/firesafetytopics/carbon_monoxide_safety.htm.

To learn more about protecting your family from carbon monoxide and other home hazards, visit www.firstalert.com.

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