



## Service Project Teams Up Universities And Fire Departments To Install First Alert Alarms In At-Risk Homes

June 18, 2019

### First Alert, Campus Firewatch and Michael H. Minger Foundation Partner for Third Annual Town/Gown Fire Safety Community Service Project

AURORA, Ill., June 18, 2019 /PRNewswire/ -- Fire safety leaders are partnering for the third-annual Town/Gown Fire Safety Community Service Project, pairing college students with fire departments across the nation to help install smoke alarms in at-risk homes in their communities. This unique project is coordinated through a partnership between First Alert, the most trusted brand in home safety\*, Campus Firewatch and the Michael H. Minger Foundation, and invites colleges, universities and fire departments across the country to apply for the opportunity to participate.

Experience the interactive Multichannel News Release here: <https://www.multivu.com/players/English/8561751-first-alert-campus-firewatch-michael-h-minger-foundation-town-gown-project/>

Selected departments will receive free First Alert smoke and carbon monoxide (CO) alarms along with educational materials—helping students learn fire safety by doing fire safety and impacting long-term community safety.

Fires and fire deaths continue to be prevalent and preventable, with surprising statistics further highlighting the importance of the Town/Gown project. According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA):

- Every 24 seconds: A fire department responds to a fire (1.3 million)
- Every 88 seconds: A fire breaks out in a home (357,000)
- Every 3 hours and 20 minutes: Someone dies in a house fire (3,400)
- Every 50 minutes: Someone is injured in a house fire (14,670)
- Three out of four: The number of fires that occur in the home, the very place that most people feel the safest.
- Three out of every five: The number of home fire deaths that result from fires in homes without smoke alarms or any working smoke alarms.

"The NFPA further reports that in the fires where a smoke alarm was present, but did not operate, half of them had missing or disconnected batteries. But when a home *does* have working smoke alarms, it cuts the fatality risk in reported home fires in half," said Tarsila Wey, director of marketing for First Alert. "Smoke alarms are one of the easiest solutions to implement and most important home safety devices, and through the Town/Gown project, we're able to both educate communities about fire safety and install alarms in at-risk homes for a long-lasting impact."

To help address this national issue at the local level, fire departments, colleges and universities across the country are invited to apply to participate in the Town/Gown project. The entry period will open 12:00 a.m. Central Daylight Time (CDT) on June 18, 2019, and will end at 11:59 p.m. CDT on July 22, 2019. Twenty-five organizations will be selected to receive alarms and educational materials to distribute in their communities by having students work alongside firefighters doing home safety visits. Building on successes of the first two years, First Alert aims to donate and install thousands of alarms to increase the number of working smoke alarms in American homes and improve fire safety.

To learn more or submit an application for the Town/Gown Fire Safety Community Service Project, visit [FirstAlert.com/TownGown](http://FirstAlert.com/TownGown).

#### **Town/Gown Project Teaches Fire Safety at Grassroots Level**

"The collaboration between students, fire departments, universities and their surrounding communities builds an overall stronger, safer community," said Ed Comeau, founder of Campus Firewatch. "Teaching these students fire safety by doing fire safety is an important life skill that benefits not only the students, but those around them as well."

"The Town/Gown project is a truly unique volunteer opportunity where students get to work alongside fire safety professionals to help at-risk community members," said Gail Minger, president of the Michael H. Minger Foundation. "The students gain real-world knowledge about what they should—and shouldn't—do in regard to smoke and CO alarm placement and maintenance."

"Campus Firewatch and the Michael H. Minger Foundation are exceptional organizations that share our mission to increase fire safety awareness," said Wey. "They're invaluable partners in this project as we work to help protect families and their homes."

#### **Fire Safety Do's and Don'ts**

In order to protect what matters most in the event of a fire or CO emergency, First Alert recommends careful preparation and planning:

- **Do: Check where your alarms are placed.** The U.S. Fire Administration and NFPA advise that homes have smoke alarms installed inside every bedroom, outside each sleeping area and on every level of the home, including the basement. For CO alarms, homes should have at least one alarm on each level and one in or near every bedroom.
- **Don't: Install it, then forget it.** Smoke alarms don't last forever and should be replaced every 10 years. And don't assume your alarm is working properly; test it monthly and change the batteries at least once a year or if a low battery chirp occurs. Alarms with a 10-year sealed battery provide hassle-free protection, eliminating the risk of forgetting to change the batteries or having an alarm deactivated due to battery removal.
- **Do: Make and practice an escape plan.** It is essential to plan an emergency escape route and practice it at least twice a

year. This ensures that everyone knows how to evacuate the home safely and where to meet, in the event of an emergency.

To learn more about fire safety, visit the First Alert website at [www.firstalert.com](http://www.firstalert.com), the Campus Firewatch website at [www.campus-firewatch.com](http://www.campus-firewatch.com) or the Michael H. Minger Foundation at [www.mingerfoundation.org](http://www.mingerfoundation.org). You also can follow the Town/Gown Fire Safety Community Service Project on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) via #TownGownFire.

*\*First Alert Brand Trust Survey, February 2018 – Results are based on the responses of 1,000 adults, ages 25 and older, living in the United States who completed an online survey, February 15-19, 2018. Results are statistically significant at a 95 percent confidence level and can be generalized to the entire adult population in the United States within those statistical parameters. For more information or a copy of the complete survey results, contact Tim Young at LCWA: 312/565-4628 or [tyoung@lcwa.com](mailto:tyoung@lcwa.com).*

#### **About Campus Firewatch**

Campus Firewatch is a social entrepreneurship focused on helping to save lives at our nation's campuses. For more information, visit <http://www.campus-firewatch.com>. [Facebook](#) | [@campusfirewatch](#)

#### **About Michael H. Minger Foundation**

The Michael H. Minger Foundation was formed following the death of Michael Minger in a residence hall fire. The Foundation focuses on fire safety for all students, including students with special needs such as physical, sensory and cognitive disabilities. More information is available at [www.mingerfoundation.org](http://www.mingerfoundation.org) or on Facebook at [facebook.com/mingerfoundation](https://facebook.com/mingerfoundation).

#### **About BRK Brands, Inc.**

BRK Brands, Inc. (Aurora, IL), is a fully owned subsidiary of Newell Brands. For 60 years, BRK Brands, Inc. has been the manufacturer of First Alert®-branded home-safety products, the most trusted and recognized safety brand in America. BRK® Brands designs and develops innovative safety solutions including Tundra™ Fire Extinguishing Spray, Onelink by First Alert smart home products, a comprehensive line of smoke alarms, carbon monoxide alarms, fire extinguishers and escape ladders to protect what matters most. Such products are also marketed under the BRK Electronics® brand, The Professional Standard for the builder and contractor audiences. BRK Brands, Inc. products are found in more than 30 countries worldwide. For more information, visit <http://www.firstalert.com>, <http://www.brkelectronics.com> or <http://www.newellbrands.com>.

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