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October is National Fire Prevention Month, so it's the perfect time to go over important fire safety tips to ensure your home and family are protected. Kade Witten, Driver/EMT with the Miami Fire Department, is one half of the team who specializes in spreading the word about fire safety.

He and MFD Fire Chief Robert Wright shared some tips about smoke detectors, which are a key part of fire safety in the home and the MFD gives them away.

"We still have the program here, where you can call and get on our list," Witten said. "We'll come out and install them [smoke detectors] and we can come and change the batteries also. This is normally geared more towards the elderly, but there are exceptions to that rule."

The program is made available through the Red Cross. The organization supplies the smoke detectors and the MFD fills out a questionnaire for them.

"We want every house in Miami to have a working smoke detector," emphasized Wright. "Whatever that takes, because they save lives. Working smoke detectors reduce the risk of dying by more than 55% and three out five deaths occur in a house without a working



## MFD TALKS ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF FIRE SAFETY

smoke detector. For us, that's about the best thing you can do in your house, is to have a working smoke detector."

Wright explained that the MFD also responds with the Quapaw Nation on automatic aid for them. Between that and the city combined with their fire district, they respond to an average of 40 to 50 structure fires each. Most of these are homes.

"We have a lot of homes that are vacant in Miami and a lot of vagrants," said Wright. "They'll go in there, trying to stay warm. During the winter it's worse. None of those homes that are vacant have utilities, and it rarely lightening or spontaneous combustion causing those fires."

Some fires are accidental, but some homes are set on fire intentionally. No matter the cause, if you and your family are home when a fire breaks out, it's critical

to have working smoke detectors to give you an early warning.

"Ideally, you should have one in every bedroom that's being slept in," Witten said. "You're also supposed to check it once a month and put a new battery in it every October, or once a year. We always say October because of fire safety month, so it's a good time to remember it."

Witten and fellow Driver/EMT Kenton Kline put a fire safety program each year for the kids to teach them the importance of fire safety at a young age. The program is usually performed live at the Coleman in front of large groups of kids, but ongoing concerns about COVID-19 have hampered that endeavor.

"We made a video this year," said Witten. "We used the actual, professional video then spliced the video we made with it and it was like

25 minutes long. We sent the video out to all the schools.

"We usually do five to six shows throughout fire prevention week for the various school, who all gather at the Coleman. They're still kind of leery about sending everyone to a big gathering like that. Last year, we did smaller groups in person at the individual schools."

Wright said they do an awesome job and each year's theme is used in coloring books handed out to the kids, which are purchased through the support of numerous local businesses.

"Kade is one of the three clowns we had this year," said Wright. "We really appreciate the businesses who sponsor the coloring books. Every child gets one."

"My goal is to take our clowns and go out and recognize each of these sponsors along with our

fire pup, which is our fire prevention promotor within the system. Those guys work really hard and the kids love the program. It's a good

outreach."

The kids really get into the fun of the fire safety program. They practice "Stop, Drop & Roll" and EDITH drills (Exit Drills In The Home). But the kids also really listen, said Wright.

"It's funny, we'll occasionally get people who come in after we've done the show and they'll say, 'Hey my kid was telling me what they learned and we don't have smoke detectors.' So, they really do listen to us."

For more information about fire safety and prevention, visit the National Fire Protection Association website at [www.nfpa.org](http://www.nfpa.org).



**Miami Fire Department Driver/EMT Kenton Kline (left) and Driver/EMT Kade Witten clown it up to talk about the seriousness of fire safety.**

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## WEEK 8 CAPSULES

<p><b>Pawhuska @ Afton</b> has been cancelled</p> <p><b>Catoosa @ Miami</b> Records — Catoosa 3-4 (2-2 in District 4A-3, T4th), Miami 2-5 (0-4 in District 4-3, 8th) Last week — Catoosa 21, Oologah 20; Wagoner 55, Miami 16 Last meeting — DNP in 2020; Catoosa 21, Miami 20 (2019) Series record — Catoosa leads 10-7, dating back to 1986</p> <p><b>Quapaw @ Oklahoma Union</b> Records — Quapaw 5-2 (3-1 in District A-5, T2nd), Oklahoma Union 4-2 (3-1 in District A-5, T2nd) Last week — Quapaw 48, Afton 16; Pawhuska 44, Oklahoma Union 0 Last meeting — DNP in 2020; Oklahoma 26, Afton 0 (2019) Series record — Oklahoma Union</p>	<p>leads 11-10, dating back to 1994</p> <p><b>Commerce @ Fairland</b> Records — Commerce 5-2 (3-1 in District A-5, T2nd), Fairland 5-2 (3-1 in District A-5, T2nd) Last week — Commerce 41, Ketchum 6; Fairland 40, Wyandotte 20 Last meeting — DNP in 2020; Commerce 21, Fairland 8 (2019) Series record — Commerce leads 50-24-1, dating back to 1924</p> <p><b>Wyandotte @ Ketchum</b> Records — Wyandotte 0-7 (0-4 in District A-5, T6th), Ketchum 1-6 (0-4 in District A-5, T6th) Last week — Fairland 40, Wyandotte 20; Commerce 41, Ketchum 6 Last meeting — Wyandotte 47, Ketchum 20 (2020) Series record — Wyandotte leads 19-4, dating back to 1976</p>
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