

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE FIRE MARSHALS
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 9, 2016

Contact: Jim Narva, Executive Director
Phone: 202-737-1226

State Fire Marshals Urge Amazon and Other Retailers to Remove Potentially Unsafe Fire Safety Products

The National Association of State Fire Marshals (NASFM), an association whose principal membership comprises the senior fire officials in the United States and their top deputies, is asking the country's largest online retailer to stop the sale of smoke alarms that are not tested to nationally-recognized standards and which may not comply with applicable building codes in many states and municipalities. NASFM is also asking the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) to take action to ensure consumers are protected and purchasing safe products.

In question are smoke alarms that do not carry the testing labels from a Nationally Recognized Third Party Testing Laboratory such as Underwriter Laboratories (UL) or Intertek/ETL – the two largest independent safety testing companies for electrical products. Products with these marks are evidence that the smoke alarm has been independently tested and complies with UL 217, Standard for Smoke Alarms, the industry-accepted standard for smoke alarms.

"Perhaps no other items sold to consumers today play a more critical role in protecting their families against fire than smoke alarms," said NASFM President Butch Browning, who also serves as the Louisiana State Fire Marshal. "Consumers can buy products bearing trusted third party laboratory marks with confidence, knowing that they have been subjected to the prescribed review process and can expect their smoke alarms to perform as promised when needed. Often, that performance can mean the difference between life and death.

"We are asking the CPSC to investigate this matter and urge Amazon and other online retailers to stop selling smoke alarms and other fire safety products that do not carry the UL or ETL marks, or marks from another third party that has tested the alarms to the UL 217 standard," he added. "We are also asking that retailers review their smoke alarm products and remove any non-listed products from their websites immediately."

NASFM identified several smoke alarm brands lacking third party testing laboratory marks on Amazon including: X-Sense, Arikon and Bovon.

Browning explained that smoke alarms sold in the United States are sent to UL or Intertek/ETL for testing and review. The two testing companies test smoke alarms in

accordance to the UL 217 standard, the industry-accepted standard. Products not tested to this standard may not accurately detect fire, alarm the consumer in a timely fashion, and operate for the desired time period or other critical functions. Browning noted that the third-party listing also protects the consumer from potential legal penalties.

“Additionally, many states, including Louisiana, require alarms that are to be installed in residential or commercial occupancies to be listed by approved third-party testing agencies and bear the mark of that agency showing the product is tested and listed to the UL 217 standard. And as such any products that are installed by a consumer not meeting the listing and testing requirements is in violation of the law and subject to the prescribed penalties,” Browning said.

About NASFM, “50 States – One Strong Voice for Fire Prevention”

The principal membership of NASFM comprises the senior fire officials in the United States and their top deputies. The primary mission of the National Association of State Fire Marshals (NASFM) is to protect human life, property and the environment from fire and related hazards. A secondary mission of NASFM is to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of State Fire Marshals’ operations. In addition to its principal membership, NASFM has several categories of membership to allow companies, associations, academic and research institutions, and individuals who support NASFM’s mission to contribute in meaningful ways. Learn more about NASFM and its issues at www.firemarshals.org.