



American Burn Association

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Dear Sir:

The Burn Prevention Committee of the American Burn Association has adopted as this year's campaign a crusade to decrease burn/smoke injury, death, and property loss due to inadequately extinguished, or dropped, cigarettes. Statistics from the National Center for Health Statistics (H.E.W.) and other sources indicate that approximately 3,500 people die and eight to ten thousand people are injured annually due to dropped cigarettes. Estimated dollar loss due to fires caused by dropped, burning cigarettes is in the 1.5 to 2 billion dollar range (National Fire Protection Association).

The following facts accumulated during our two year research period reveal that:

1. A freshly lit cigarette will burn approximately 24 minutes when placed on a flat surface.
2. A lit cigarette dropped into a piece of upholstered furniture will start to smolder within 10 to 15 minutes, and a fire may start within 30 or more minutes.
3. Cigarettes continue to burn after being lit because:
 - a. Citrate or phosphate salts are added to a thin porous paper
 - b. Sodium or Potassium Nitrate is added to tobacco through fertilization or curing

Sources for this data include the Tobacco Industry and the California Bureau of Home Furnishing.

Our crusade, then, is to create consumer demand for and seek Tobacco Industry Cooperation in producing SELF-EXTINGUISHING CIGARETTES - i.e. cigarettes that will stop burning if not puffed or if left unattended for five minutes.. There are 27 patents filed in the United States describing methods to make cigarettes self-extinguish. Studies from the National Cancer Institute state that an average smoker will puff a cigarette every 45 to 60 seconds, therefore, production of a cigarette that will self-extinguish in five minutes or less would not inconvenience the smoker.

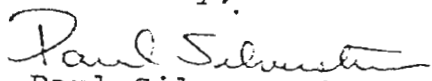
By reducing the amounts of citrate, phosphate and nitrates used in cigarette manufacture, the cost of production should decrease, not increase. The public relations impact of the Tobacco Companies doing something for the consumer would be invaluable in the face of the continuing barrage of criticism from H.E.W. and anticancer groups.

Please note that our campaign has nothing to do with cancer or heart disease. We do not ask people to stop smoking. We simply plea that the lives of smokers and their families be made safe by preventing fires starting from unextinguished cigarettes accidentally falling into furniture, bedding, rugs, trash cans or grassy/wooded areas. A cigarette that extinguishes within five minutes if unattended would achieve this goal under most circumstances.

To create consumer demand in support of this project, we plan a national media blitz based in 15 to 20 cities late in May. We already have articles accepted for May publishing deadlines in national magazines. TV spots and network news coverage has been planned. The Consumer Products Safety Commission and the U. S. Fire Administration have also been notified and their support is enlisted.

Please reply to our request as soon as possible. We would like to include in our program a commitment from the Tobacco Industry to aid in this project by voluntary production of cigarettes that will self-extinguish.

Sincerely,


Paul Silverstein, M. D.
Chairman
Burn Prevention Committee
American Burn Association


Mr. Andrew McGuire
Executive Director
Northern California Burn Council