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STEPHEN D. COAN  
STATE FIRE MARSHAL

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Heads of Fire Department

**FROM:** Stephen D. Coan  
State Fire Marshal

**DATE:** August 1, 2015

**SUBJECT:** **Breathe Easy: Using Home Oxygen Safely Campaign**

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Fires from home oxygen continue to be an issue in Massachusetts with on average 1-2 people die in Massachusetts each year in these fires. In the past decade, there have been ten fire deaths, 47 injuries, and six firefighter injuries from burns and fires involving home oxygen. Very often these fires impact publicly owned housing and their tenants.

The Department of Fire Services has contracted with the [Massachusetts Health Promotion Clearinghouse](http://massclearinghouse.ehs.state.ma.us/) to distribute our free educational materials from the *Breathe Easy: Using Home Oxygen Safely* campaign. These include a pamphlet in English, Spanish and Portuguese and a poster in English. The Clearinghouse catalog can be found online at <http://massclearinghouse.ehs.state.ma.us/> and click on *Oxygen Safety at Home* in the left hand column. You can order printed materials or download them from this website.

Health and medical professionals have long turned to this MA Department of Public Health supported source for educational information for their clients and patients and we thought this would help us reach physicians who prescribe medial oxygen more effectively. Anyone can also use this free service. Fire departments are encouraged to share these materials with local councils on aging, housing authorities, hospitals, and home health care agencies.

These materials and other resources for fire departments can be found on the Department of Fire Services website. Type "Home Oxygen" in the search box to find the [Breathe Easy: Using Home Oxygen Safely](#) page. This webpage contains a Guideline for the Fire Service on educating smokers on the dangers of smoking while on oxygen therapy, a Powerpoint™ presentation that can be adapted for group presentations, TV and radio public service announcements, and other information.

*Administrative Services • Division of Fire Safety*  
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