



# NEWS

## R E L E A S E

**RALPH HUDGENS**  
COMMISSIONER OF INSURANCE  
SAFETY FIRE COMMISSIONER  
INDUSTRIAL LOAN COMMISSIONER

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**For Immediate Release**  
**October 30, 2014**

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### **HUDGENS: DEADLY HOUSE FIRE IN WALKER COUNTY RULED ACCIDENTAL**

**Atlanta** - Fire Investigators with Insurance and Safety Fire Commissioner Ralph Hudgens' office have ruled an early morning fatal house fire in Walker County accidental.

Killed in the fire was Peter Whittenberger, 60. The home located at 963 Round Pond Road, LaFayette, Ga., was heavily damaged. The fire call came in at 8:55 a.m.

The investigation revealed that the fire originated in the living room area of the home and was the result of a wood burning stove that malfunctioned. No evidence of a working smoke alarm was found in the home.

Commissioner Hudgens reminds citizens that having a working smoke alarm doubles the chances that you will survive a fire in your home. Last year in Georgia, there were 91 fatal residential fires and forty-three of those fires didn't have a working smoke alarms.

This fatality brings Georgia's fire death total to 87 for 2014.