



## NEVADA PUBLIC SAFETY DEPARTMENT

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### IT HAPPENED TO OUR FIRE DEPARTMENT: REDUCING HOME OXYGEN FIRES IN YOUR STATE

On April 21, 2022 and April 22, 2023, our fire department experienced two home oxygen therapy (H.O.T) fires resulting in the deaths of two people and injuries to two family members. The total property damage was estimated at \$680,000. The medical costs exceeded \$1.2 million dollars. Our firefighters were subjected to repeated exposure to burn victims from these two fire events, resulting in a significant mental health impact. Following these two incidents, I learned that, based on media reports, a person dies every four days from HOT fires. There are over 1.5 million people in the U.S. on home oxygen to manage various respiratory conditions and research suggests the number of COPD patients requiring home oxygen therapy will rise dramatically as the population ages. This means it is even more important that we act now.



*April 22, 2023 one person died and two family members were severely burned from a home oxygen therapy fire. Smoking while on oxygen was the cause.*

There are national efforts to develop fire codes, create ISO standards, and encourage the use of tested bi-directional thermal fuses in oxygen tubing as an engineered solution to reduce secondary ignitions for combustibles when oxygen tubing ignites in a fire. Countries that have mandated bi-directional thermal fuses have seen dramatic reductions in fatalities from home fires related to HOT.

In addition to requesting that the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services adopts a reimbursement code to assist home medical oxygen suppliers in adding thermal fuses to oxygen tubing, we are working state-by-state to encourage Health and Human Services departments in all 50 states to reimburse thermal fuse installation via their state Medicaid programs.

Join our cause and email me to get involved. Help protect our communities and our firefighters from this growing fire epidemic at [rreynolds@cityofnevadaiaowa.org](mailto:rreynolds@cityofnevadaiaowa.org).

Raymond Reynolds, Fire Chief