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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 3, 2009

Division of Fire Safety Aims for Safe Summer Amusement Rides Season

JEFFERSON CITY — Missouri's Division of Fire Safety is already busy conducting "spot" safety inspections of carnival and other amusement rides to help ensure a safe summer season. The Division, a part of the Missouri Department of Public Safety, has responsibility for oversight and enforcement of Missouri's Amusement Ride Safety Act.

"Missouri amusement ride regulations aim to ensure that all rides are mechanically sound and operated in a safe manner. However, patrons and parents play a key safety role as well," said State Fire Marshal Randy Cole. "Parents, children and other patrons should listen to ride operators' instructions, follow posted warning and rider restriction signs and never put a child on a ride they are afraid to ride."

All amusement ride equipment is inspected annually using manufacturer guidelines and nationally recognized standards. After an inspection by a state approved third party safety inspector, the Division of Fire Safety issues a state operating permit. The permits are valid for twelve months and must be affixed to each ride. If a permit is not visible or if a ride operator won't provide information about whether the ride is in compliance with state laws and regulations, the public is urged to contact the State Fire Marshal's Office. "If citizens have concerns about the safety of a ride they should immediately contact the Division of Fire Safety at 573-751-2930, so we can make sure the ride is safe," says Fire Marshal Cole.

Legislative changes in 2004 authorize the Division to conduct "spot" safety inspections of amusement rides operating in the state. These inspections not only help ensure the rides remain in a safe operating condition, but they also provide an avenue to ensure inspections conducted by state approved inspectors have been performed in accordance with applicable standards and guidelines.

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