



DAVID CRIGGER/BRISTOL HERALD COURIER

Bristol, Va., Fire Marshal Eric Blevins shows how the StoveTop FireStop attaches to a range hood above a stove in the fire department's kitchen.

A FEW OUNCES OF PREVENTION:

Safety device purchased with federal grant proves its worth for Bristol family **A5**



and didn't spread, the family was still displaced for several days and it caused about \$1,000 worth of damage," he said.

Blevins said the city is the first in the area to apply for such a grant and to install the units. And Monday night's fire offered proof the grant money was well-spent, he said.

"A fire could cause the destruction of a whole building, take lives, cost thousands in repairs and use up valuable resources at the Red Cross," Blevins said. "This FireStop, not only can it save lives, but it saves the city a lot of money."

The units, bought in bulk, cost about \$45 a pair, Blevins said, and can be purchased individually at such stores as the Home Depot and Lowes for around \$60.

Sometimes, a small act of prevention can pay off, Blevins said.

"This morning, I went back over there and replaced the used FireStop," he said Tuesday.

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'StoveTop FireStop' performs as advertised

REASONABLY PRICED SAFETY DEVICE prevents a kitchen fire disaster in a Bristol, Va., apartment

BY AMY HUNTER
BRISTOL HERALD COURIER

BRISTOL, Va. — Following a small kitchen fire Monday night, a mother and her two babies are safe in their home today — thanks to a safety device bought with federal grant money.

Lindsey Rock was in the middle of a balancing act Monday — tending to her children, one 4 months old and the other 15 months old, while using the stove around suppertime. Suddenly, a stove-top fire sparked in the kitchen of her apartment on 2nd Street, Eric Blevins, the city's fire marshal, said Tuesday.

Then, BOOM!!! The sound echoed throughout the apartment, as well as in the building's eight other units, and the fire was extin-

LOOKING FOR ONE?

The city has about 30 pairs of the StoveTop FireStop devices remaining, with special consideration going to families with children or senior citizens. Call the Bristol Virginia Fire Department at (276) 645-2546.

guished almost as quickly as it started.

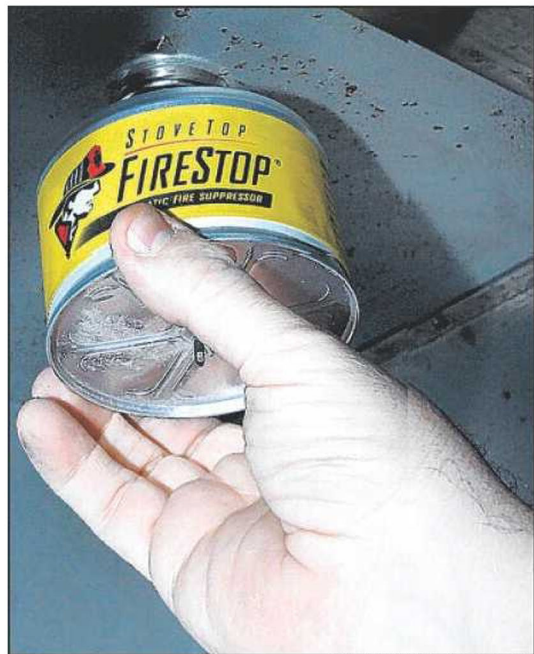
The sound came from the "StoveTop FireStop" installed on the stove's vent hood. The device drops baking soda — about a box worth — on the stove's eyes the instant it senses a fire.

"Basically, we went in and cleaned up the stove, the baking soda and that, checked to make sure everything was safe, and left," Blevins said Tuesday. "The family slept at home last night."

The pair of FireStops installed in Rock's kitchen were part of 1,000 pairs the city bought with the help of a Homeland Security grant for fire prevention. Since August, fire and city officials along with management teams from various apartment buildings have installed the devices at Springdale Village Apartments, where Rock lives, Eastridge Apartments, Leisure Park Towers and all of the city's federally subsidized housing.

In Bristol, Va., statistics from 2004 through 2006 reveal that 53.6 percent of fires in single- and multi-family dwellings started in kitchens, Blevins said.

"Last year, we had a similar fire at Springdale, and even though it was put out quickly



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A closeup of the StoveTop FireStop safety device.