

For immediate release:  
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## SCETV showcases “A Town on Fire” documentary with a special public screening

**COLUMBIA, S.C.** – South Carolina ETV (SCETV) will showcase its documentary, [A Town on Fire](#), during the [National Fire Association’s Fire Prevention Week](#) with a special screening and discussion ahead of its broadcast on ETV-HD. The one-hour documentary, which premiered earlier this year, will re-air on Oct. 10 at 8 p.m.

**A Town on Fire** shares the story of a fire that killed 77 people near Camden more than 100 years ago which still impacts South Carolina and the nation. On the night of May 17, 1923, flames erupted during a graduation celebration at the Cleveland School in Kershaw County. The fire spread rapidly throughout the two-story, crowded school as people rushed to escape.

Days later, shock changed to concern as members of the community questioned weak building and fire codes that existed across the United States. **A Town on Fire** shares how victims’ relatives and town leaders initiated a movement to ensure such a tragedy never happens again.

**A Town on Fire** is produced by South Carolina ETV (SCETV) with support from the ETV Endowment of South Carolina. Producer Shae Winston’s is a dedicated storyteller with a passion for exploring significant local issues. His previous works include *Backroad Bites*, *Our Town* and *Palmetto Scene*.

A public [screening and discussion](#) will be held from 6 to 8 p.m. on Oct. 8 in SCETV’s Murray Studio located at 1041 George Rogers Blvd. in Columbia. Advance [registration](#) is requested for this free event.

In addition to the broadcast on Oct. 10, **A Town on Fire** will also air on Oct. 14 at 9 p.m. on the South Carolina Channel and on Oct. 15 at 2 p.m. on ETV World. The documentary is also available to stream on-demand using the free PBS App or on the [scetv.org](#) website.

### QUOTES

“The people of Kershaw County channeled their grief into advocacy, driving reforms in fire safety that have protected countless lives across the country. SCETV is honored to document this pivotal moment in South Carolina’s history and share the profound stories of those who turned tragedy into meaningful change.”–  
**SCETV President and CEO Adrienne Fairwell**

“Even over a century later, television gives us the unique ability to revisit and learn from past events such as the Cleveland School fire of May 1923. **A Town on Fire** serves as a powerful reminder of the 77 lives lost and the lasting impact this tragedy had on the survivors and their community.”–**SCETV Interim Director of Television Cheryl Nunnley**

“Creating **A Town on Fire** allowed me to highlight how a small, close-knit community influenced nationwide fire safety standards through their determination and resilience. This documentary is a tribute to their spirit, and I hope it encourages viewers to recognize their own potential to spark meaningful change.”–**SCETV Multimedia Producer Shae Winston**

### FAST FACTS

- [A Town on Fire](#) tells the tragic story of a 1923 fire that killed 77 people at the Cleveland School in Kershaw County.



- SCETV will host a free public [screening and discussion](#) on Oct. 8, 2024, at Murray Studio in Columbia, from 6 to 8 p.m. Advance [registration](#) is requested.
- The documentary will re-air during [Fire Prevention Week](#) on Oct. 10 at 8 p.m. on ETV-HD, with additional broadcasts on Oct. 14 and Oct. 15.
- The documentary highlights the community's efforts to push for stronger fire safety regulations, which influenced national fire codes after the tragedy.
- ***A Town on Fire*** is produced by SCETV's Shae Winston with support from the ETV Endowment of South Carolina.

### **About South Carolina ETV and Public Radio**

South Carolina ETV and Public Radio (SCETV) is the state's public educational broadcasting network. SCETV amplifies South Carolina voices, provides educational experiences and strengthens communities, while working toward creating a stronger, more connected and informed South Carolina. In addition to airing local programs, such as *Carolina Classrooms*, *Making It Grow*, and *This Week in South Carolina*, SCETV also presents multiple programs to regional and national audiences, including *By The River*, *After Action*, *Reconnecting Roots*, *Reel South*, *Somewhere South*, *Yoga in Practice* and *How She Rolls*. In addition, SC Public Radio produces the national radio production, *Chamber Music from Spoleto Festival USA*.

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