

HISTORICAL HIGHLIGHTS  
OF THE CAMPAIGN FOR A  
FIRE-SAFE CIGARETTE

August 1, 1854

First American patent (Bristol #11,409) issued for "self-extinguishing" cigarette.

March 31, 1932

"Washington, March 31 (AP)--With the aid and encouragement of Representative Edith Nourse Rogers of Massachusetts, the (National) Bureau of Standards is out to prove to the world the practicability of a self-extinguishing cigarette...(the National Bureau of Standards) developed a treatment which caused the cigarettes to go out as soon as thrown away...

Now Dr. Lyman Briggs, acting director of the bureau has written Mrs. Rogers that all there is to do is to find a manufacturer to take up the idea."

-Boston Herald American (3/31/1932)

September, 1950

"What causes a cigarette to go on burning after it is tossed away? The California Fire Marshal's laboratory recently tested 55 brands of cigarettes and found that the paper in each had been treated with precipitate chalk; this makes the paper more porous, thus letting in more oxygen and creating a kind of natural draft which keeps the cigarette burning to the end.

Tests by the National Bureau of Standards showed that cigarettes would seldom set anything afire until they had lain still long enough to burn an inch....

The bureau also discovered that coating the butt end of a cigarette with sodium silicate ("water glass") totally sealed the pores of the paper; when discarded that cigarette would not continue to burn....the tobacco industry is not yet ready to make its product less of a fire hazard. The faster cigarettes burn, the more are used, the bigger the sales."

-The Reader's Digest (Sept., 1950)  
"So You Want to Burn to Death!"

March, 1974

U.S. Senator Phil Hart pushes self-extinguishing cigarette bill through the Senate; bill is killed in committee in the House of Representatives.

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May 9, 1974

"We believe that a cigarette designed to have a limited unassisted burn time can substantially reduce the hazard to the consumer arising from a smoldering cigarette in contact with upholstered furniture. Such an approach would deal with the primary cause of incidents of this type without significantly inconveniencing the smoker. In our opinion, the approach appears to be technically feasible, although considerable research will be needed."

-Arthur D. Little, Inc.  
Cambridge, Massachusetts  
"Memorandum to Furniture Flammability Committee  
Reduction of the Ignition Hazards of Cigarettes"  
May 9, 1974

July 2, 1979

"It is clear from our work and the work of others, that a self-extinguishing cigarette would reduce the likelihood of cigarette ignition. We have tested typical furniture constructions with regular and self-extinguishing cigarettes and obtained ignitions with the regular cigarettes and no ignitions with the self-extinguishing cigarettes."

-U.S. Department of Commerce  
National Bureau of Standards  
Center for Fire Research  
Product Flammability Research  
James H. Winger, Head  
(in a letter to Mr. Andrew McGuire,  
July 2, 1979)

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October 2, 1979

"Results of the testing show that the colite treated cigarette, under the conditions of these tests, shows a significant decrease in burn time when compared to the standard untreated cigarette. For the treated-cigarette samples tested with the mockup, all self-extinguished between 2 minutes, 30 seconds and 6 minutes. All untreated cigarettes burned to the filter when tested on the mockups using the same combinations of fillings and fabrics. Time to burn to the filter ranged from 18 minutes to 28 minutes. (Three) 3 of the tests on the untreated cigarette...led to a smoldering condition....

Based on these results, the use of colite treatments to enhance the self-extinguishing properties of cigarettes appears to hold promise, barring any unforeseen environmental and health effects resulting from the presence of colite (sodium silicate)...."

-Laboratory Report Nos. 2442-79 & 2443-79  
State of California, Department of Consumer  
Affairs,  
Bureau of Home Furnishings  
Gordon H. Damant, Chief

October, 1979

Congressman Joseph Moakley (D-Boston) introduces Cigarette Safety Act in the U.S. House of Representatives.

January, 1980

Senator Alan Cranston (D-California) introduces Cigarette Safety Act in the U.S. Senate.

April, 1980-1983

The state legislatures in Oregon, Massachusetts, California, New York, Maryland, Virginia, Illinois, and Connecticut hold hearings on state versions of the Cigarette Safety Act.

March 21, 1983

First Congressional hearing on Cigarette Safety Act (H.R. 1880) in the Health and the Environment Subcommittee of the Energy and Commerce Committee.

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- July, 1983 California State Senator Garamendi's bill passes Senate.
- July, 1983 US Senate holds hearings before the Special Committee on Aging.
- May 2, 1984 New York State Assemblyman Grannis has hearing on New York State fire-safe cigarette bill.
- May 3, 1984 Press Conference with Congressman Moakley, Senator Cranston, and Senator Heinz announcing agreement with Tobacco Institute on Fire-Safe cigarette bill.

STATES THAT HAVE INTRODUCED OR HELD HEARINGS ON FIRE-SAFE CIGARETTE LEGISLATION

New York	1983, 1984
Michigan	1983
Oregon	1980, 1981
California	1982, 1983, 1984
Connecticut	1982, 1983
Massachusetts	1982, 1983
Maryland	1983, 1984
Virginia	1983
Illinois	1982, 1983
Kansas	1984

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