



VENTURA COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT

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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Ventura County Fire Receives Federal Grant Funding to Provide Smoke Alarms to High Risk Communities & Fire Prevention Education

CAMARILLO, CA - Ventura County Fire (VCFD) has been awarded a FEMA federal grant in the amount of \$157,000 to establish and implement a county-wide campaign for the installation of smoke alarms in homes currently not containing sufficient alarms, as well as expand fire prevention education to the community. Our overall goal is to improve the survival rate of injuries and fatalities due to home fires.

Two-thirds of Ventura County's house fire deaths occur at nighttime in homes without working smoke alarms. The presence of working smoke alarms provides early notification, which allows not only more time to escape the fire, but also allows for an earlier 911 call and subsequent earlier arrival of VCFD first responders to save lives and minimize fire damage. Working smoke alarms increase survival by 50%, a clear indication of the vital importance of this campaign.

The grant, which is for the duration of one (1) year, will target neighborhoods throughout Ventura County that are considered "high-risk" for home fires due to lack of reliable smoke alarms. Groups most at risk of being affected are seniors 65 years of age and older, youth 14 years of age and younger, low-socioeconomic residents, and residents who are hard of hearing. Through this campaign, VCFD is working specifically with GLAD (Greater Los Angeles Agency on Deafness, Inc.) to provide specialized smoke alarms to our hard-of-hearing residents.

"In a fire, seconds can mean the difference between life and death. Properly installed and maintained smoke alarms can give the occupants the extra time needed to evacuate," commented Fire Marshal Massoud Araghi.

With this grant-funded campaign, VCFD will be accomplishing the following two-prong goal:

1. The installation of 1,400 long-life smoke alarms, CA Title 24 Code compliant, as well as 30 specialized alarms for the hard-of-hearing; and
2. The planning, organization, and implementation of in-home fire safety educational materials and presentations to the public. Spanish speakers will be available.

For more information, contact VCFD's Fire Prevention Office (Smoke Alarm Campaign) at (805) 389-9771.

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