

INSURANCE COUNCIL OF TEXAS

service, information, and representation for the property and casualty insurance industry

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Seven Texas Cities to Receive Smoke Alarms

The Insurance Council of Texas (ICT), the State Fire Marshal's Office (SFMO), Travelers Insurance Company and First Alert have joined together to place smoke alarms into the homes of limited income and elderly residents in seven Texas cities. The project, *We're Out to Alarm Texas*, is in its third year of assisting needy Texans.

This year, 1,000 smoke alarms will be distributed to firefighters in Lufkin, Hidalgo, El Paso, Galveston, Farmers Branch, Waco and New Braunfels. Firefighters will begin installing the smoke alarms during Fire Prevention Week, which begins October 7.

ICT works closely with the SFMO in reviewing fire data in assessing what cities have a higher than average number of seniors and low income residents who are injured or killed in residential fires. The campaign has resulted in the donation of more than three thousand smoke alarms to residents through out the state.

We're Out to Alarm Texas has already saved lives and property. On October 23, 2006, a disabled woman was rescued by Waco firefighters from her smoke filled home after her donated smoke alarm went off. On April 1, 2007, an elderly New Braunfels couple was awakened by smoke alarms, when their roof caught fire. Fire marshals in both cities said there would have been fire fatalities had it not been for the smoke alarms.

Residents contact each fire department to enroll in the smoke alarm project. Firefighters not only install the new alarms, but inspect the home to make sure other alarms are working and point out potential fire hazards. Each fire department keeps track of where the smoke alarms are installed so that firefighters can determine if the alarms were instrumental in saving lives or property.

Each home is provided at least one First Alert Ultimate Smoke & Fire Alarm that is guaranteed for ten years. First Alert home safety products such as smoke alarms and fire extinguishers have been in the market for more than 25 years.

Mark Hanna, an ICT spokesman says the *We're Out to Alarm Texas* project is placing smoke alarms in homes where there are none, replacing smoke alarms that no longer work and providing homeowners fire prevention information.

“This project relies heavily on the assistance of firefighters to reach those in need and install these smoke alarms,” said Hanna. “By already saving three lives and alerting hundreds of others to the value of smoke alarms, the program has clearly been a success.”

The Insurance Council of Texas is the largest insurance trade association in the state consisting of more than 500 property and casualty insurers writing business in Texas.

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