



LAKELAND FIRE DEPARTMENT

Media Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: Monday, November 23, 2015

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Lakeland Firefighters & American Red Cross Volunteers Will Install Smoke Alarms November 24

Lakeland, FL - Firefighters from the Lakeland Fire Department (LFD) and members of the American Red Cross will be hitting the streets and visiting local residents door to door at the Citrus Center Colony on Tuesday, November 24, 2015 to perform free smoke alarm inspections and install smoke alarms as needed from 9:00 AM to Noon.

Citrus Center Colony, a mobile home community for residents 55 years of age and older, is located at 1111 W Beacon Rd. The community was recently in the news after a tragic fire fatality that occurred at the community on November 11, 2015. In light of the recent events, the Lakeland Fire Department and the American Red Cross want to perform this smoke alarm campaign while the issue of fire safety is fresh on residents' minds. Event organizers want to raise awareness among residence on the fact that mobile homes are more susceptible to severe damage from home fires, elderly adults are more likely to die in a fire, and that working smoke alarms are proven to save lives.

This effort is a result of a partnership between LFD and the American Red Cross who kicked off a national campaign in early 2015 to reduce deaths and injuries through the use of smoke alarms in neighborhoods. This will be the second time LFD and the American Red Cross partner to install smoke alarms. The first event took place in February 2015 and was a success.

During the smoke alarm installation program, firefighters and community volunteers will fan out to the approximately 200 homes inside the Citrus Center Colony mobile home community.

Installing smoke alarms in the homes of Lakeland residents who don't have them will increase their odds of surviving a home fire. According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), working smoke alarms are the key to saving lives from fire. "Smoke alarms are the most effective early warning device there is," says Public Education Officer, Janel Vasallo. "Just having a smoke alarm in your home cuts the chance of dying in a fire in half."

"Our goal is to make sure residents have the protection of a smoke alarm," says Rusty Brown of the American Red Cross, who helped coordinate the effort "because smoke alarms alone won't prevent every fire death, our project includes educating residents to have a home fire escape plan so they know what to do if the smoke alarm sounds."

Any member of the media interested in developing this into a story is welcome to come out during the campaign for photos, filming, interviews, etc. The event will kick off at Fire Station 2 located at 2104 S. Florida Ave. at 9:00 AM.

As a public service, please share this information to help make residents aware of the event.

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Gary Ballard, Fire Chief

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