

**GOAL 5.0 IMPROVE FIRE PREVENTION AND SAFETY EDUCATION**

*Enhance and develop additional fire prevention and education outreach programs to make communities safer.*

*Overview*

Fire prevention and public safety education are essential elements of the Department's mission. The Bureau of Fire Prevention ensures fire protection of residential and commercial occupancies City-wide through direct inspections of locations and enforcement of local laws and regulations. The Bureau of Fire Prevention supports the Department's Bureau of Operations through the exchange of essential information on locations, buildings and special events. The Department's safety education unit provides programs to educate the public about safeguarding one's home, property, family, friends and neighbors from fire and other hazards. The Department's fire safety education program has received additional financial support from a series of private and public partnerships that have broadened the scope and frequency of its educational programming.

***Objective 5.1 Continue to implement new safety requirements and evacuation plan procedures for commercial high-rise buildings.***

*Background*

The events of 9/11 focused attention on the needs for high-rise safety and to provide greater life and property protection in high-rise buildings. Because of their height and occupancy, high-rises present a unique demand on the Fire Department and building employees and occupants for both fire and non-fire-related emergencies. After September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001, the Mayor directed the Department of Buildings (DOB) to establish a Task Force to examine the World Trade Center disaster and current Building Code provisions as they relate to high-rise buildings. FDNY representatives from the Bureaus of Fire Prevention and Fire Operations participated. The Task Force developed a series of recommendations to enhance safety in commercial high-rise buildings. One recommendation called for the City to enact a new law requiring an emergency evacuation plan, in addition to a fire safety plan, for non-fire emergencies in high-rise buildings.

*Accomplishments*

The Department drafted a high-rise building emergency action plan that details new requirements and guidelines under the new law. The Department worked collaboratively with the Department of Buildings and engaged the private real estate sector in a dialogue during the development of these requirements, which went into effect in August 2006 for all commercial buildings higher than 20 stories. The Department has developed a formal process for submission to and review by the Bureau of Fire Prevention of these evacuation plans. The new law also requires building owners and management agents to educate the occupants of these commercial high-rise buildings and provide and test evacuation procedures with these occupants.



### *Next Steps and Time Frame*

The Department will:

- Establish a mechanism to review and monitor compliance by commercial building owner/management agents with the City's new high-rise evacuation laws and regulations and create an oversight mechanism for drills and record-keeping.
- Evaluate the need to develop new legislation for other types of occupancies.

### *Lead Bureaus*

- Fire Prevention
- Legal Affairs

***Objective 5.2 Continue to integrate fire prevention with community safety education programs and expand the message to include other relevant safety topics.***

### *Background*

Fire prevention and safety education efforts are closely and inextricably linked in the fire service. As the number of fires remains at its lowest level in decades, the FDNY recognizes the increasing importance of providing essential fire prevention and safety education to children, families, senior citizens, disabled individuals and the non-English-speaking public. Given the size and complexity of the City, to best meet this challenge, the Department partnered with the FDNY Foundation (formerly known as the FDNY Fire Safety Education Fund) to develop creative approaches and bring the message of fire safety to these targeted communities in each borough.

### *Accomplishments*

The FDNY Bureau of Fire Investigation assesses fire fatalities and injuries and identifies the highest-risk communities. The FDNY Foundation helped expand the FDNY education efforts to communities at greatest risk by recruiting additional safety educators to reach out to targeted areas, especially immediately following a serious fire in a particular neighborhood. The "FDNY Fire Zone on the Road" program's community "blitz" to those perceived at highest risk has been well-received. Fire Safety Teams are dispatched immediately to any community that has experienced a fire fatality.

The FDNY and its Foundation received grant funding from FEMA that allowed for the development of printed materials on fire safety and other educational subjects to be translated from English into Spanish, Chinese, Korean, Polish, Arabic, Hebrew and Urdu. This unique project enabled the Department to successfully reach these new audiences.

Fire companies face competing demands to participate in increased tactical training, inter-agency exercises and drills, conduct more inspections, attend specialized training and participate in new safety initiatives. Despite these demands, the local fire companies welcome the opportunity to directly serve the public through the Department's "Operation Sidewalk." This program entails the firehouse members providing fire safety education presentations at local schools, senior centers, festivals, health fairs and other community events. Operation Sidewalk enhances and expands the local fire companies' fire safety role in the communities they serve.



Taken together, these initiatives have allowed the Department to increase its fire safety education events by 83 percent from 2004 to 2005. Lastly, in collaboration with the American Heart Association, the FDNY established a citizen CPR training program to enhance the public's ability to assist victims before the arrival of 911 EMS resources. The Department already has trained more than 12,000 citizens, including high school students.

#### *Next Steps and Time Frame*

- Provide local fire companies with fire safety education presentation kits to be used in their surrounding neighborhood.
- Collaborate with the City's Department of Education to conduct all-day fire safety presentations in every public school, every year.
- Continue to expand the FDNY citizen cardio-pulmonary resuscitation (CPR) program to train more at-risk neighborhoods and communities in the principles and skills of CPR, so that they can act as the first link in the chain of survival for heart attack victims.
- Explore the feasibility of FDNY-EMS Command partnering with the City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene to develop an educational component with a focus on salient public health issues.
- Explore the feasibility of developing an educational component with a focus on training the public on the topic of terrorism awareness.

#### *Lead Bureaus*

- Fire Prevention
- Training
- Fire Operations