

HFD Happenings

"Operation Save-A-Life"

Kidde, the largest manufacturer of fire safety products and the Houston Fire Department have teamed up for "Operation Save-A-Life" in 2012. A press conference was called on August 27, 2012 at HFD headquarters to announce the donation of over 5,000 smoke detectors from Kidde to HFD.



Mayor Annise Parker, HFD Fire Chief Terry Garrison along with HFD Assistant Chief Thomas Munoz and representatives of Kidde, address the press to announce the "Operation Save-A-Life" smoke detector program.

Mayor Annise Parker, HFD Fire Chief Terry Garrison and Assistant Chief Thomas Munoz reminded all Houstonians on the importance of having a working smoke detector in the home. "Everyone should have a working smoke detector regardless of their ability to afford one," Mayor Parker told the press. With this generous donation from Kidde, her vision is getting closer to reality.



A participant in the "Celebrate My Drive" program attempts to solve a simple puzzle while wearing goggles that simulate one's vision while being intoxicated.

"Celebrate My Drive"

On September 15, 2012, The Houston Fire Department and State Farm hosted a "Celebrate My Drive" event to rally around new drivers and encourage safe driving habits.

Getting a driver's license brings new joy and freedom, but the first year behind the wheel can be one of the most dangerous. In an effort to prevent tragic accidents, the

Houston Fire Department extended its "Texting Distracts" Campaign to include other major causes of motor vehicle accidents. The free event was open to all young student drivers.

The event consisted of a Fatal Vision Obstacle Course. Each obstacle course included activities such as: putting puzzle pieces together, hop-scotch, jumping rope and playing catch. Once the course was completed, there were peace officers on site to put each teen through a field sobriety test. A Rollover Convincer a distracted/impaired driving course (with pedal cars) was also used to help encourage safe driving.



HFD Providing Free Smoke Detectors For The Deaf

At a press conference held September 25, The Houston Fire Department (HFD) along with the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities (MOPD), announced a new program created to furnish smoke detectors to members of Houston's deaf community.

This announcement was given by Mayor Annise Parker, HFD Assistant Chief Thomas Munoz and Elaine Roberts, Director of the MOPD at the Center for Hearing and Speech located at 3636 West Dallas.

"Working smoke detectors save lives" is not just a slogan but the most important safety message the Houston Fire Department and convey to our citizens. Every year Houston firefighters respond to thousands of residential fires. Unfortunately, some of these fires involve fatalities-fatalities that could have been avoided simply by having a working smoke detector.

It is estimated that up to 75 percent of fire fatalities occur in home that have non-working smoke detectors or none at all. Smoke detectors are one of the most important and least expensive security devices you can have in your home.

"Every citizen has the right to be protected and safe in their homes", said Mayor Annise Parker at the September 25th press conference. She added "And with the help of the Houston Fire Department with assistance from the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities (MOPD), the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Department of Homeland Security have awarded the HFD with a \$168,000 grant to purchase and install 2,000 smoke detectors for the deaf." She continued by saying "this is one of the largest grants of its type in the nation."

Elaine Roberts (MOPD) stated at the press conference, "The Houston Fire Department has already started installing these smoke detectors and expects to have all 2,000 installed by December 31, 2012."

In order to receive the entire \$168,000, twenty percent of

total amount of the grant needed to be matched by funds provided by the Houston Fire Department. The HFD reached out to our corporate community partners for support who responded with the necessary matching funds. CenterPoint Energy, Saint Arnold Brewing Company, Marathon Oil, Devon Energy, Lion and Gallery Furniture all contributed to put HFD over the top. Additional program support is also being provided by Walmart. Without the support of our corporate community partners, this program would not have been possible.

If you or someone you know has a substantial hearing loss and needs one of these specialized smoke detectors, please contact the MOPD at 281.936.0770 or 713.284.1990 or e-mail: mopdmail@houstontx.gov.

To request a regular type smoke or carbon monoxide detector, please call the HFD Public Affairs main number, 832.394.6633 or visit www.houstonfire.org.



Mayor Annise Parker addresses the press to announce the new smoke detectors for the deaf program.

HOUSTON FIRE DEPARTMENT: Here for You 24/7

“SAFE HOUSE”

The Houston Fire Department would like to remind parents that we are here to help keep kids safe.

Just as there is a church in every neighborhood to support its residents, there is a fire house nearby when someone feels threatened by a stranger, friend or family member. All fire stations are “Safe Havens” -places for both children and adults to come to if they feel they are in immediate danger (such as being followed by another person or vehicle).

Houston firefighters will make sure the person is okay and contact the local authorities. We encourage parents to tell children that this is a “safe” place they can go to if they are lost or feel they are in danger from a family member, friend or stranger. The firefighters will keep them safe until the parents and police can assist the child.

Parents and guardians should teach their children that strangers are not only people that they have never met, but can be people they don’t know too well. Even if they recognize the person from down the street or from the corner store, the person can still be a stranger who means them harm. Also, every child should know how to call 9-1-1 and ask for help.

Children should have several safe refuges that they can turn to besides a fire station such as a neighbor you trust, a business that you are familiar with or a police station.

DON'T FORGET!
When You Change Your Clock..

Change Your Battery!



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HFD 2012 Events January-September	
Fire Events	32,260
EMS Events	186,739
Total Events	219,999

HFD Contact Information

HFD Headquarters- 832-394-6700
600 Jefferson, 7th Fl., Houston, TX 77002

HFD Records- 832-394-6860
600 Jefferson, 8th Fl., Houston, TX 77002

Request a Smoke Detector
(Qualifications Apply)
832-394-6633 or www.houstonfire.org

Request a Fire Station Visit or Tour
832-394-6633 or www.houstonfire.org

HFD Recruiting- 832-394-6600

If your organization would like to receive the free Civic Safety Chain newsletter and other updates from the Houston Fire Department, please e-mail your request to: paul.box@houston.tx.gov



For more from the Houston Fire Department, please scan this code or visit: www.houstonfire.org



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THINK BEFORE YOU SINK.

Houston Fire Department, State Farm Insurance Unveil New Safety Campaign

In an effort to warn Houstonians about the dangers of driving through high water, the Houston Fire Department and State Farm Insurance unveiled a new safety campaign for August-“Think. Don’t Sink”.

The campaign consisted of a series of billboards, created in English, Spanish and Vietnamese, that were installed at the beginning of August at various locations around the city selected by the propensity of flooding in that area.

With the help of our famous southeast Texas torrential rains, underpasses and low-lying roads can be underwater in the matter of just a few minutes. Driving conditions can become treacherous, even deadly, with just an inch of rain on the roadways.

To announce this new campaign, HFD Fire Chief Terry Garrison was joined by Houston City Council Members Ed Gonzalez, and Ellen Cohen, Germaine Champion from State Farm Insurance and Chief Robert Branch of HFD Rescue at a press conference held on July 30, 2012 at Fire Station 8 in downtown Houston.

Anyone who has lived in the Houston area for any length of time know how fast the weather can change. One minute it’s a beautiful sunny day-the next minute, you’re knee deep in flood water.

A Few Facts About Flooding:

- You can be swept off your feet by only 6 inches of water
- Almost half of all flash flood fatalities occur in vehicles
- Two feet of water on a highway can float a car
- Underpasses can fill quickly even if the adjacent road is clear

Even with the drought last year, HFD still responded to over 250 high water rescues and at the time of the press conference, firefighters had already responded to over 350 high water rescues in 2012.

Heavy rain and flash flooding is a fact of life in Houston. That is why the message of “Think. Don’t Sink.” is so important.



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HFD FIRST AID TIP OF THE MONTH-

"Recognizing The Warning Signs of a Heart Attack"

In the U.S., there are approximately 1.5 million heart attacks annually of which an estimated 500 thousand people do not survive. About half of the deaths occur within one hour of the attack so if you know the warning signs of a heart attack and act quickly, the chance of the person surviving the attack increases significantly.

Someone having a heart attack may experience any or all of the following:

- Uncomfortable pressure, fullness or squeezing pain in the center of the chest
- Prolonged pain in the upper abdomen
- Discomfort or pain spreading beyond the chest to the shoulders, neck, jaw, teeth, or one or both arms
- Shortness of breath
- Lightheadedness, dizziness, fainting
- Sweating
- Nausea

A heart attack occurs when an artery supplying your heart with blood and oxygen becomes partially or completely blocked. This loss of blood flow injures or destroys part of your heart muscle. A heart attack generally causes chest pain for more than 15 minutes, but it can also have no symptoms at all.

Many people who experience a heart attack have warning symptoms hours, days or weeks in advance. The earliest warning sign of an attack may be ongoing episodes of chest pain that start when you're physically active, but are relieved by rest.

If you or someone else may be having a heart attack:

- Call 911 or your local emergency medical assistance number.
- Don't tough out the symptoms of a heart attack for more than five minutes. If you don't have access to emergency medical services, have a neighbor or a friend drive you to the nearest hospital.
- Drive yourself only as a last resort, if there are absolutely no other options, and realize that it places you and others at risk when you drive under these circumstances.
- Chew and swallow an aspirin, unless you're allergic to aspirin or have been told by your doctor never to take aspirin. But seek emergency help first, such as calling 911.
- Take nitroglycerin, if prescribed. If you think you're having a heart attack and your doctor has previously prescribed nitroglycerin for you, take it as directed. **Do not** take anyone else's nitroglycerin, because that could put you in more danger.
- **Begin CPR.** If you're with a person who might be having a heart attack and he or she is unconscious, tell the 911 dispatcher or another emergency medical specialist. You may be advised to begin cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). If you haven't received CPR training, doctors recommend skipping mouth-to-mouth rescue breathing and performing only chest compressions. The dispatcher can instruct you in the proper procedures until help arrives.

Source: www.mayoclinic.com



The AMBUS

The Houston Fire Department recently took delivery of a new vehicle to transport victims of mass casualty incidents - The AMBUS. What is the AMBUS? The AMBUS is just what it sounds like: an ambulance and a bus all in one. The AMBUS is 42' long and has the ability to transport 20 stretcher patients or seat 24 individuals if needed. It can accommodate 10 wheelchair patients, or is available at extended incidents to provide a cooling area for firefighters when rehab is needed.

This vehicle was given to HFD by the Southeast Texas Regional Advisory Council (SETRAC) who maintains the authority to deploy the AMBUS throughout the state of Texas if needed. The AMBUS will be an invaluable tool in our efforts to increase our survival rates and provide better customer service.



November 27- December 18, 2012

For more information on how you, your business or community can help bring some holiday joy by donating new toys for local families in need, please call 832-394-6636 or e-mail: paul.box@houston.tx.gov



Toy Drive

Share The Joy, Share A Toy!

Parents: It's Immunization Time Again!

Houston Fire Department/Blue Cross Blue Shield Care Van Free Immunization Clinic Dates for Fall 2012

Clinic Times- 4:00pm-6:30pm

Parents or adult guardian must accompany their children and bring their current immunization records.



Thursday	Oct. 11	Larkin Community Center	5410 Larkin Street
Thursday	Oct. 18	HFD Fire Station 29	4831 Old Galveston Road
Thursday	Nov. 1	HFD Fire Station 44	675 Maxey Road
Thursday	Nov. 8	Larkin Community Center	5410 Larkin Street
Thursday	Nov. 15	Kingdom Builders Family Life Center	6011 West Orem
Thursday	Dec. 6	HFD Fire Station 29	4831 Old Galveston Road



The Leaves Are Falling & So Are The Temperatures.

Steps you can take to be warm and **safe** in the colder months ahead.

After a long, record-breaking, hot summer, fall has finally arrived and brought relief in the form of cooler temperatures. The unprecedented heat wave has been replaced by cool, crisp evenings and comfortable days. However, as dangerous as the extreme heat conditions were, the cool weather presents its own set of problems that require us to practice a new series of routines to ensure the safety of our loved ones and property.

HEATING YOUR HOME

Every year, the Houston Fire Department responds to hundreds of fires that are caused by space heaters or old, malfunctioning furnaces. As soon as it gets colder outside, we turn on our heaters without much thought of how safe they are. Unsafe heating units,

whether they are small space heaters or complete furnace systems, can cause a deadly fire to happen at any time. The following safety tips will help you keep warm and, **more importantly**, safe over the colder months coming up.

If you have an installed heating system in your home, have it inspected and serviced every year by a licensed professional. They can find serious defects in your system and correct those problems. If you use a space heater there is a simple rule that you should remember before you use it- **"Space Heaters Need Space"**.

• Keep space heaters at least three feet away from any combustible material. That includes drapes, furniture and even walls.

• **NEVER** leave your children alone in a room with a space heater. Also, do not let them move the heater or adjust the controls.

• **NEVER** use extension cords with space heaters and **NEVER** run the heater cords under rugs or carpet. These cords can overheat and start a fire. Check the cord. If the cord is hot unplug it immediately.

• **NEVER** overload the electrical outlets or breakers.

• **ALWAYS** place the space heater on the floor.



• Open-Faced heaters should have a proper screen and grates in place. **NEVER** operate a defective heater.

• Electric heaters permanently installed in the wall or ceiling should have lint and dust removed regularly because they can easily burn. Maintain your heater regularly following manufacturer's recommendations.

• Purchase a heater that has a tip-over shutoff safety switch.

GAS HEATERS

• When using a gas heater, always provide adequate ventilation by opening a window, approximately one inch, to prevent the buildup of carbon monoxide.

• Light the match before turning on the gas. This will prevent the risk of flashback cause by accumulating gas.

• Purchase a carbon monoxide detector if you use a gas heater or fireplace to heat your home.

FIREPLACES

There is nothing like a fire in the fireplace on a cold night.



The crackling of the flames and the warm glow that illuminates the room make an inviting haven to get away from daily stresses of life. A fireplace though, provides its own series of dangers that can be eliminated with proper use and maintenance.

BURN SMART!

• Have your fireplace and chimney inspected and cleaned annually by a certified chimney sweep.

• Minimize creosote buildup in the chimney.

• Make sure your fire fits your fireplace. A fire that burns too hot or is too large can crack your chimney.

• **ALWAYS** use a fireplace screen.

• Clear the area around the fireplace of debris.

• **NEVER** overload the fireplace and **NEVER** use the fireplace to burn trash. It is not an incinerator.

• Keep a fully charged fire extinguisher on hand.

• Check the flue for obstructions like bird's nests and trim any overhanging branches to a minimum of 10 feet away from the chimney.

• **NEVER** leave a fire unattended. Make sure the fire is extinguished before you go to bed.

• Place logs toward the back of the fireplace preferably on a grate.

• Dispose of ashes in covered metal containers placed outside in a non-combustible area.

• Keep your fireplace in good working condition.

• Install and maintain smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.

Enjoy this cool weather for it doesn't last for long in Houston. It is a perfect time to be outdoors at a festival, a game or other event. But if you get too cold, come in and warm up. Just use these tips and you should make it safely through even the coldest days.