

PRESS RELEASE/MEDIA ADVISORY:

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Lieutenant Joel French

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Town of Epsom NH Fire Chief Announces Participation in Grant Program to Prevent Fire and CO-Related Injuries and Deaths Among High-Risk Residents

Town of Epsom NH Fire Chief R. Stewart Yeaton is proud to announce the town will be one of NH's communities benefitting from FEMA's **Get Alarmed New Hampshire** Fire Prevention and Safety Grant (FP&S), distributed through the NH Department of Safety's Division of Fire Safety. The program provides free carbon monoxide and smoke alarms throughout owner-occupied homes where children under 6 and/or adults 60 or older reside. It is designed to provide a safety net for those most vulnerable to the effects of fire and carbon monoxide. According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) the populations most at risk of fire fatalities in residential structures are children under the age of six and adults over the age of fifty nine. About one in four (23.7%) of NH residents fall in this category, or over 300,000 residents (314,455).

Chief Yeaton says, "A fire doubles in size every minute. When a fire is detected by smoke alarms, occupants only have minutes to escape before being overcome by the effects of smoke."

Neighboring towns including Dover and Rye are participating in **Get Alarmed New Hampshire** as well, which also includes education around fire prevention and safety, including escape planning. The grant was awarded to the NH State Fire Marshal's office with a goal of assisting members of the fire service community with outreach and providing tools to effectively teach and keep their residents safe.

According to Grant Manager Kevin MacCaffrie, "Eighty-five percent of the local fire departments in the state are manned by paid on-call or volunteer personnel and we need to do everything we can to make their jobs easier."

From 2005 to 2015 NH had 107 residential fire fatalities. Two thirds of those (66.4%) were over the age of 51. Of the incidents reported in that time period, 7 in ten (69%) had inoperable or no smoke alarms present.