

*City of Alexandria, Virginia*

## MEMORANDUM

DATE: JUNE 2, 2006

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: JAMES K. HARTMANN, CITY MANAGER 

SUBJECT: SUBMISSION OF SMOKE ALARM INSTALLATION AND EDUCATION GRANT TO VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF FIRE PROGRAMS

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**ISSUE:** City Council consideration of a grant application to the Virginia Department of Fire Programs (VDFP) and Virginia Fire Services Board (VFSB) for the Smoke Alarm Installation and Education Grant.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That City Council:

- (1) Approve the submission of the Smoke Alarm Installation and Education Grant; and
- (2) Authorize the City Manager to execute all the necessary documents that may be required.

**BACKGROUND:** The Virginia Department of Fire Programs and Virginia Fire Services Board have dedicated FY 2006 funding to purchase a limited number of smoke alarms to distribute across the Commonwealth under the **Be FireSafe, VIRGINIA!** program. These smoke alarms will be distributed to Fire Departments and organizations involved in fire safety projects in Virginia. The goals of the program include increasing the number of homes with working smoke alarms, increasing the number of residents who plan and practice a fire escape plan, and increasing the number of residents who test their smoke alarms monthly.

**DISCUSSION:** The City of Alexandria has approximately 15,000 individuals who are over 60 years old. Many within this population do not have the funds or physical ability to install smoke detectors. With this grant award, the City is proposing to partner with the Meals on Wheels Program to target 80 senior and special needs residents who are homebound, as recipients of this program. The Meals on Wheels Program is administered by the Department of Human Services in the Office of Aging and Adult Services. Currently, the Black Fire Service Professionals of Alexandria (BFSP), an employee group, deliver meals several times per month to these residents through the Meals on Wheels Program.

In the event that this proposal is funded, the Black Fire Service Professionals have volunteered to deliver the letters that invite residents to participate in the Smoke Alarm Installation and Education Program. The letter will further explain that those who choose to participate can contact a volunteer to set up a visit to their residence. The Alexandria Volunteer Fire Department has offered to provide the complimentary smoke alarms, assess fire prevention measures in each residence, and provide educational materials on fire safety and smoke alarms. The participants will also be asked to complete a basic fire safety survey. The visit from the volunteer will last approximately one hour.

By partnering with Meals on Wheels, Black Fire Service Professionals and the Alexandria Volunteer Fire Department, the City can impact a manageable number of this vulnerable target population. Within a 12-month period, the City can reach out to 80 residents to install smoke alarms and provide educational literature regarding fire hazards.

**FISCAL IMPACT:** If awarded the grant, the VDFP will provide smoke alarms and educational materials to the City, which would be worth approximately \$1,500. There is no City match required.

The City would be responsible for the normal administrative costs associated with this grant, including reporting oversight to be provided by the Fire Department.

The grant application was submitted, in order to meet the deadline of April 30, 2006, with the understanding that subsequent City Council approval would be required to accept this grant award.

**STAFF:**

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