Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health

Johns Hopkins Center for Injury Research and Policy

Vision 20/20

Fire is Everyone's Fight™

SMOKE ALARM SUMMIT

1. **Experience from Home Visits in 29 communities**
2. **Firefighter Attitudes Toward Prevention**

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Communities That Did Home Visits

WSAFM FY2008

- Dallas, TX
- Portland, OR
- Tucson, AZ
- Vancouver, WA
- Wilmington, NC

IFE FY2009

- Amherst, MA + 4 smaller
- Lexington, KY
- Madison, WI
- Philadelphia, PA

IFE FY2010

- Alexandria, VA
- Cleveland, OH
- Washington, DC Columbia
- Palm Beach County, FL
- Rosemount, MN

WSAFM FY2011

- Bellevue, WA
- Chelan Fire District 5, WA
- Lake Stevens, WA
- Redmond, WA
- Snohomish, WA

WSAFM FY2012

- Chelan Fire District 5, WA
- Chelan Fire District 7, WA
- East Pierce, WA
- West Pierce, WA
- Kitsap, WA
- Spokane, WA

Homes Visited

Homes visited	**21,000**
Homes entered	**14,000**
People in homes entered	**33,000**
Homes with demographic risk factor (elderly, young children, smokers, disabilities)	**67%**

Situation Found

	Yearly Range	Grand Average
Homes with no working smoke alarm	22-51%	35%
Smoke alarms not working	19-35%	26%
Homes with no escape plan	28-63%	39%

Actions Taken

	Yearly Range	Five Years
Alarms installed	2,500-14,000	35,000
Av. number installed per home	2.2-5.1	2.6
Homes given instruction on maintaining smoke alarms	73-91%	88%
Homes given written safety materials	67-86%	67%

Results of the Visits

	Yearly Range	Grand Average
Homes with working smoke alarms	92-100%	96%
Avg. number of working alarms per home	3.6-4.4	3.8
Homes meeting code for alarms	83-97%	87%

Going Forward

- Institutionalize concept of home visits
- Already proven internationally, but need to evaluate results in U.S.
  - Reported fires
  - Casualties

    [We have addresses of 30,000 homes visited and public education topics addressed]
- Convince firefighters to help with home safety visits ; can't do with prevention staff alone

National Survey: Firefighter Attitudes Toward Prevention

- Respondents
  - 600 firefighters
  - 173 communities in 42 states
  - All sizes of departments
  - 87% respondents in operations
- Method for surveying
  - Request and link to on-line questionnaire disseminated by IFE, WSAFM, NVFC article, others
  - Part self-selected, part asked to respond

Firefighter Experience in Prevention

- 88% participated in inspections. Of these:
  - 80% businesses/institutions
  - 64% schools
  - 75% single family homes (Whaaat?)
- 97% participated in public education. Of these:
  - 94% schools
  - 85% station visits
  - 29% single family homes
- Ice has been broken for firefighters doing home visits.

Firefighter Attitudes: Prevention in General

- 98% : prevention important for department to do
- 58% : department should do more prevention
- 39% : about right level of prevention now
- Only 2% : do less prevention

Firefighter Attitudes: Home Safety Visits

- 63% : departments should do home safety visits
- 77% : willing to do home safety visits themselves
- Top reasons for being willing:
  - Good public relations 95%
  - Increase value of firefighters to community 85%
  - Reduce civilian casualties 80%
  - Reduce injuries to firefighters 71%

Firefighter Attitudes (continued)

- Top reasons for not willing to do visits, or not sure:
  - Too much to do 61%
  - Fear of liability 43%
  - Not trained to do 18%
  - Concerned about personal safety 11%
- Write-ins
  - "People's privacy should be respected."
  - "Step too far for government unless requested."

Going Forward

- Collect broader data:
  - Get larger, more random sample
  - Do analysis by state, population, volunteers, …
- Develop strategy to overcome FF objections:
  - Explain that households have to allow entry
  - Show that risk is low (liability, FF injuries)
  - Teach how to do visits
  - Get fire service leadership to think strategically about workday priorities (over the week, over the year)

Contact Information

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