

Project Narrative for Fire Prevention Program:

The Cherryville Fire Department does not presently have a fire prevention program. The only efforts performed are during Fire Prevention Week at our local elementary school. This once a year effort consists of one person standing in front of 700 children speaking about fire safety. We do not have adequate equipment to project classes for the senior citizens. Due to this there are no efforts for senior citizens in regards to fire safety. The only tool we are able to request is an already out of date fire safety house owned by the county in which we are located. This house usually cannot be used by a majority of the fire departments located within the county due to a large request for its use. During the past few years' negative situations have evolved. The children of our community are not aware of the dangers of fire. There have been eight suspicious fires where children were possibly involved over the past twelve months. The most current fire involved six children entering an abandoned building. While inside the children were playing with fire, which resulted in the loss of the entire building, valued at \$600,000.00. Another recent example for a needed fire prevention program is the loss of an elderly lady due to her home catching on fire. This situation occurred during the winter months while using a space heater. The woman's name was Ms. Bessie Logan. Ms. Logan did not have any smoke detectors inside of her home. Her life could have been saved if a fire prevention program were utilized with the necessary tools to provide educational fire safety classes that emphasized the importance of smoke detectors. The Cherryville Fire Department concluded this incident with a neighborhood blitz that consisted of going door to door inquiring about smoke detectors, batteries and safety issues concerning detectors in their home. The outcome was tremendous. A rough estimate of 100 homes was contacted where either half of those homes either did not have any smoke detectors, no batteries or had dead batteries. The Cherryville Fire Department received many smoke detectors from the Gaston County Volunteer Firemen's Association to install in those homes. Batteries were also purchased and installed by the City of Cherryville. The Cherryville Fire Department has aggressively pursued the budgeting for needed materials to provide an adequate fire prevention program. A city our size is impacted greatly with the present economic situation. The City of Cherryville is losing day to day from its tax base. We are being asked to cut 10% from our budget this year alone. The money is only present for fire protection leaving prevention outside of the necessary cycle in which the fire service operates. Please help us end a vicious cycle. If granted to receive money for the implementation of this program, we will utilize

every component indefinitely. The city has agreed to fund a program once the setup is established. We also take pride for teamwork building efforts that supercedes our own community. This means we would allow the use of all available materials throughout our county and surrounding counties that include Cleveland, Lincoln and our own, Gaston County within North Carolina. This money would allow the purchase of a fire safety house, Sparky the fire dog costume, laptop computer, and projector. Our program would be set up to accommodate all ages with a variety of safety programs from fire to severe weather. The key components of teaching all ages would incorporate all equipment purchased. The laptop computer with projector will allow professional visual aid by means of audio, large screen display (for senior citizens) and more in depth text information. Power Point programs could store unlimited class outlines of objectives, tests, actual case scenarios and other educational material. The fire safety house equipped with a severe weather package would allow all ages to experience real life emergencies such as fires, tornado's and hurricanes. The fire safety house will include bleachers for all classes to sit comfortably while pertinent information is delivered to them. Lastly, the Sparky the fire dog costume would allow us to deliver all classes in a fun and exciting manor where children could not resist learning about fire and other important safety issues.

In closing, we considered all categories and found the fire prevention program as the most important. The Cherryville Fire Department vitally needs this program. Due to many textile plants closing along with one of the top ten major trucking companies the City of Cherryville is in no shape to supply these necessary purchases. We strongly urge you to consider the importance of fire safety within a community that has proven its need. Please help keep our vision of "safeguarding our community through exceptional service" alive.

*See following sheet for accurate job loss impact study.