

Quality and Productivity Commission
34th Annual Productivity and Quality Awards Program
"Leading with Excellence"

2021 APPLICATION

Title of Project (Limited to 50 characters, including spaces, using Arial 12-point font):

NAME OF PROJECT: **F.I.R.E.! Family Instructions for Rapid Escape**

DATE OF IMPLEMENTATION/ADOPTION: **FEBRUARY 2020**

(Must have been fully implemented for a minimum of at least one year - on or before July 1, 2020)

CHECK HERE IF THIS PROJECT IS BEING SUBMITTED FOR THE **COVID-19 IMPACT AWARD ONLY**. (Projects must be implemented on or before December 31, 2020. **Note:** Projects implemented less than one year ago will not be eligible for any other PQA awards. In addition, once a project is submitted, you cannot submit the same project for awards consideration in subsequent years).

PROJECT STATUS: Ongoing One-time only

HAS YOUR DEPARTMENT PREVIOUSLY SUBMITTED THIS PROJECT? Yes No

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: Describe the project in 15 lines or less using Arial 12 point font. State clearly and concisely what difference the project has made.

1 If there was a fire in your home, would you know the best way to escape? In most
 2 house or apartment fires, a properly prepared or maintained window can provide the
 3 quickest, safest, and most immediate way out. With recent changes to home
 4 construction and furnishings, today's fires burn hotter, spread faster, and churn out
 5 more toxic gases than ever before. In the past, residents had about 17 minutes to
 6 escape a house fire once their smoke alarm activated, but today that time has dropped
 7 to three minutes or less. To help address the problem of fatal fires, Los Angeles County
 8 Fire Department (Fire Department) Fire Captain (Captain) Brian Cieslak researched,
 9 developed, and authored the Family Instructions for Rapid Escape (F.I.R.E.) public
 10 education program. In early 2020, the Fire Department and LA County Fire Department
 11 Foundation (Foundation) proudly introduced the F.I.R.E. parent guide and
 12 accompanying color book to walk families through a few simple steps they can take to
 13 make their homes "F.I.R.E." ready and teach them new strategies so they can escape
 14 and survive if a fire strikes.
 15

BENEFITS TO THE COUNTY

(1) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED ANNUAL COST AVOIDANCE	(2) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED ANNUAL COST SAVINGS	(3) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED ANNUAL REVENUE	(1) + (2) + (3) = TOTAL ANNUAL ACTUAL/ESTIMATED BENEFIT	SERVICE ENHANCEMENT PROJECT
\$	\$	\$	\$	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

ANNUAL = 12 MONTHS ONLY

SUBMITTING DEPARTMENT NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS Los Angeles County Fire Department 1320 North Eastern Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90063		TELEPHONE NUMBER (323) 881-6180
PROGRAM MANAGER'S NAME Assistant Fire Chief Mike Inman EMAIL Mike.Inman@fire.lacounty.gov		TELEPHONE NUMBER (626) 974-8371
PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME AND SIGNATURE <small>(PLEASE CALL (213) 893-0322 YOU DO NOT KNOW YOUR PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME)</small> Heidi Oliva Executive Support Division Chief	DATE 06/21/21	TELEPHONE NUMBER (323) 881-6109 EMAIL Heidi.Oliva@fire.lacounty.gov
DEPARTMENT HEAD'S NAME AND SIGNATURE Fire Chief Daryl L. Osby		DATE 06/21/21 TELEPHONE NUMBER (323) 881-6180

****ELECTRONIC, WET, OR SCANNED SIGNATURES ARE ACCEPTABLE****

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1st FACT SHEET – LIMITED UP TO 3 PAGES ONLY: Describe the **challenge(s), solution(s), and benefit(s)** of the project to the County. What quality and/or productivity-related outcome(s) has the project achieved? Provide measures of success and **specify assessment time frame.** Use Arial 12 point font.

Challenge: Each year in the United States, there are over 380,000 residential fires, causing more than 2,700 deaths and 12,000 injuries. Children are at greatest risk for death or injury in these fires. In the past, families had about 17 minutes to escape a house fire. Today, families have three minutes or less after their smoke alarms are activated. These dramatic changes in fire behavior demand a significant change in how we think about escaping from a burning building. For years, fire safety programs have encouraged family members to first try the door, crawl, and “stay low,” in an attempt to remain underneath the thermal layer of extreme heat, blinding smoke, and deadly gases. But recent statistics reveal that most residential fires occur at night, start on the first floor, and originate in the living room or kitchen. Since doors leading outside are often located in these same rooms, escape routes through the house may actually lead right to the fire itself! For fires that result in fatalities, the leading cause of death is inhalation of toxic smoke and gases. In reality, the only available exit may be a window. This “F.I.R.E.” guide is the result of years of careful research, reflecting the most current data from the U.S. Fire Administration, Federal Emergency Management Agency, and Underwriters Laboratory, combined with the expertise of fire service professionals, educators, and psychologists. The accompanying coloring book mirrors the principles of the F.I.R.E. guide but is written expressly for children.

Solution: The Family Instructions for Rapid Escape or F.I.R.E. is a unique educational guide to provide County of Los Angeles (County) residents with tools to acknowledge the increasing dangers of residential fires as well as the ability to develop a fire safety plan at home and teach the plan to other family members, namely children. Through years of research by Captain Cieslak, the Fire Department and Foundation introduced two (2) essential guides to provide to residents at no cost – the F.I.R.E. guide and F.I.R.E. coloring book. The F.I.R.E. guide which serves as a booklet for adults provides readiness checklists and simple instructions on how to assess potential hazards in the home, such as:

- Checking windows in the home and ensuring adults repair or replace broken or damaged windows as well as have a solid understanding of how each window operates.
- Ensuring that household items or furniture are not obstructing access to windows.
- Ensuring that window safety measures, such as sticks, rods or other make-shift devices, would need to be retrofitted for quick-release mechanisms.

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- Ensuring that the doors are not secured with make-shift devices that would hinder or obstruct rapid escape.
- Ensuring escape ladders are readily available and easily accessible for use in case of a fire on the second floor or above.
- Ensuring that household screens can be easily removed.
- Ensuring that there are no hazards or obstructions outside or below the window, such as tools, vegetation, or other dangerous objects that would interfere with a safe escape.
- Ensuring sliding glass doors open easily while also repairing or replacing any damaged latches, hinges, or hardware.
- Ensuring that family members are able to operate the sliding doors and windows in an emergency.
- Ensuring the proper installation and maintenance of smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.
- Providing clear and easy to follow instructions on escape options to follow in the home, such as use of a window or door to escape.
- Providing step-by-step instructions on how to make a F.I.R.E. escape plan.
- Providing checklists on how to practice F.I.R.E. drills in the home with all involved family members, particularly children.

In addition to the F.I.R.E. guide, the 12-page coloring book highlights key points relative to fire safety and teaches children how to safely escape from a fire at home. The F.I.R.E. program is a vital public education program that is taught to residents by fire personnel who routinely perform safety trainings in our school districts, for our city partners, private organizations, and other entities who request such trainings. Both the Fire Department and Foundation provide the F.I.R.E. guide and coloring books to the public at no cost. Hard copy materials are readily available at Fire Department administrative sites as well as digital copies via the Fire Department and Foundation websites. A public education and community outreach kit was also developed and shared via our website and social media platforms. Post COVID-19, the F.I.R.E. public education program will continue to be expanded with the development of a Public Service Announcement and additional outreach with our school communities.

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Results/Successes of the Program: The F.I.R.E. public education program was launched in February 2020. In April 2020, the Fire Department saw a very concerning surge in home fires across the County. In one week alone, Fire Department firefighters responded to four separate fires that resulted in six fatalities, including two teenagers. With more residents spending time at home due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Fire Department reiterated the importance of ensuring that families are prepared for emergencies and that their homes are fire-safe. Fire Chief Daryl L. Osby joined our County partners at a COVID-19 briefing to share the importance of the F.I.R.E. public education program while our Public Information Office worked with media outlets to convey this important information. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, access to our administrative facilities, including our fire stations, has been closed to the public since March 2020. With all community events and trainings also canceled, the Fire Department has continued to utilize our website and social media platforms to push out messaging on the importance of the F.I.R.E. public education program. To date, more than 10,000 parent guides and 5,000 coloring books have been shared with the Fire Department’s community services liaisons for distribution to residents. Additionally, in 2020, 9,000 parent guides and 18,000 coloring books were disseminated to Los Angeles County libraries for distribution to library visitors. Post COVID-19, community outreach will continue along with the development of a Public Service Announcement to accompany the F.I.R.E. public education program. It is also our goal to translate the F.I.R.E. guide and coloring book into multiple languages.

Benefit of Program to the County: The F.I.R.E. public education program has been a success and holds the promise for expansion to our fire service peers throughout the nation. As with all fire safety, planning ahead is key! Through the F.I.R.E. program, the Fire Department was able to fill a critical public education need for our residents. Through the parent guide, we are able to walk adults through a few simple steps they can take immediately to make their home F.I.R.E. ready and teach them new strategies they can employ, so families can safely escape if and when a fire strikes. The accompanying coloring book, while mirroring the principles of the F.I.R.E. message, is written and made expressly for children. In our quest to provide the “gold standard of service” in all that we do as proud protectors of life, property, and the environment, we recognize our residents play the most important role in protecting their families. Together, we can plan ahead and save lives!

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Linkage to the County Strategic Plan – 1 page only. Which County Strategic Plan goal(s) does this project address? Explain how. Use Arial 12-point font.

As identified in its Strategic Plan, the County is committed to aggressively addressing society’s most complicated social, health and public safety challenges. The County wants to be a highly responsive organization capable of responding to complex societal challenges, one person at a time. The F.I.R.E. program supports the County’s Strategic Plan and Goals as the program serves as a cutting edge public safety educational guide providing County residents with tools to acknowledge the increasing dangers of residential fires, as well as the ability to develop a fire safety plan at home and teach the plan to other family members, namely children. This program is transformative as it allows residents to increase their ability to be self-reliant in the case of an emergency and also save lives in residential fires that are becoming increasing more dangerous.

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COST AVOIDANCE, COST SAVINGS, AND REVENUE GENERATED (ESTIMATED BENEFITS TO THE COUNTY): If you are claiming cost benefits, include a calculation on this page. Please indicate whether these benefits apply in total or on a per unit basis, e.g., per capita, per transaction, per case, etc. You must include an explanation of the County cost savings, cost avoidance or new revenue that matches the numbers in the box. Remember to keep your supporting documentation. Use Arial 12-point font

Cost Avoidance: Costs that are eliminated or not incurred as a result of program outcomes. Please indicate whether these are costs to the County or to other entities.

Cost Savings: A reduction or lessening of expenditures as a result of program outcomes. Please indicate whether these were expenditures by the County or by other entities.

Revenue: Increases in existing revenue streams or new revenue sources to the County as a result of program outcomes.

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The cost of this program is shared with the Foundation. While the Fire Department developed the program, the Foundation assists with financing the printing costs of the adult guide, children's coloring book, and other promotional materials. To date, the Foundation has contributed \$25,000 toward the F.I.R.E. public education program. Materials (guide and coloring book), webpage development/management, toolkit and promotional materials are managed through the Fire Department's Executive Support Division (ESD) Communications Section. Delivery of the F.I.R.E public education program is funded through the Fire Department's operating budget. Public education outreach, jointly managed by the ESD Communications Section and Public Information Office, is offered via on-duty firefighter and community services liaison personnel.