



HOUSTON FIRE DEPARTMENT

NEWS RELEASE

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Council Member Presents Equipment to HFD

City of Houston Council Member Mike Sullivan, District E, presented \$26 thousand worth of needed equipment during a press conference today, July 16, 2009, at the Houston Fire Department's Val Jahnke Training Academy.

According to Council Member Sullivan, with a surplus office budget, he was financially able to fund the purchases and purchased these items in an effort to ensure that the fire stations in his council district have every tool available to them.

The items include Fog Fluid for smoke simulation machine; plywood for training; Outdoor Speakers for training; an Aqua Vest Rehab System; a thermal imaging camera, eight cyanide, antidote kits; five power cutter saws and one cutter for HFD Rescue.

The Aqua Vest Rehab System is designed to cool firefighters during rehab by supplying cooling by pumping water from the cooler through insulated hoses to individual vests that contain 50' of capillary tubing each. This rehab system is very simple and easy to use yet it returns firefighters vital signs to normal quickly and safely.

The generation of smoke in a confined space produces an atmosphere of reduced, and often times, zero visibility. The Thermal Imaging Cameras differentiate temperature differences as low as one tenth of a degree. As firefighters perform their search, they will be able to use the cameras to scan the inside of the structure, picking up temperature differences that would detect victims who otherwise might go unnoticed. The cameras can also be used to detect fire hidden in void spaces, thus providing for a quicker extinguishment and reduction in property loss.

HFD first used thermal imagers in August of 1999, placing them on all of the ladder trucks, two rescue trucks, two hazardous material units and the Command Van. Since then, the department has increased and updated the cameras through Homeland Security grants and donations from the Fire Fighters Foundation of Houston. Currently, the Houston Fire Department Thermal Imaging Cameras on each engine and ladder.

HFD has already used several cyanide antidote kits to save civilians and two firefighters from smoke inhalation. This kit which is usually to victims at the scene of a fire, works fast enough to save lives in minutes. This Cyanokit contains hydroxocobalamin, a precursor to vitamin B-12, which binds to cyanide and neutralizes it so the poison is no longer toxic and can be eliminated harmlessly from the body through urination.

The Houston Fire Chief is grateful for Council Member Sullivan's contributions and thanks him on behalf of all of the members of the fire department.

"We appreciate Councilmember Sullivan's support of the Houston Fire Department," said Fire Chief Phil Boriskie. "These items will help to ensure that not only the citizens of Houston are better protected, but also help the brave members of the fire department."