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The Philadelphia Fire Department and the Office of the State Fire Commissioner to announce smoke alarm grant and join forces with the American Red Cross SEPA Chapter and PECO for the Energizer Battery "Change Your Clock - Change Your Battery" National Fire Safety Educational Campaign.

Philadelphia: Commissioner Lloyd Ayers announces that the Philadelphia Fire Department has received a grant of approximately 6,000, 10 year, sealed, lithium battery powered smoke alarms from the Office of the State Fire Commissioner. This award is part of a \$369,000, United States Fire Administration, Fire Prevention Grant given to the State of Pennsylvania.

In order to focus the public's awareness on this important subject, on Friday, March 12 at 10:30 a.m., Fire Commissioner Ayers, Edward Mann, Pennsylvania State Fire Commissioner, Tom Foley, CEO, Southeastern Chapter of the American Red Cross and Eric Helt, Vice-President of Construction and Maintenance for PECO, will hold a press conference at the Fire Administration Building, 240 Spring Garden Streets to "officially" announce Philadelphia's portion of the State grant in conjunction with this year's spring "Energizer Change Your Clock – Change Your Battery" campaign.

Commissioner Ayers stated that "As a result of this grant, on Saturday, March 13 and Sunday, March 14, all Philadelphia Fire Department Engine and Ladder companies will visit blocks in their local fire safety and education districts to install smoke alarms, distribute literature, answer questions and replace 9-volt batteries upon request. Our goal is to install 2,000 smoke alarms as quickly as possible."

Last year 30 Philadelphia residents died in fires. Of these fatalities, 21 occurred in properties that did not have a smoke alarm, or had dead or missing batteries. "For the Fire Department, even one resident injured or killed is too many," said Commissioner Ayers. "This gift will enable us to bolster our efforts to install smoke alarms and remind all Philadelphians of the importance of their proper maintenance, practicing a home escape plan and the completion of the Home Fire Safety Check List."

Mr. Foley said that "March is Red Cross Month, so this is an especially valuable time to remind the community about fire safety. Since January 1, we have responded to more than 450 disasters, most of them fires. Many of the people we help survived because they had working smoke alarms, but unfortunately, too often that's not the case."

We are honored to join with the Red Cross and Philadelphia Fire Department to educate the community about fire safety," added Eric Helt, "We are a longtime partner of the SEPA Chapter of the American Red Cross. Their local disaster relief efforts are unmatched."

Following the event, volunteers from the American Red Cross SEPA Chapter and PECO will join the Philadelphia Fire Department in a fire safety walkthrough, passing out fire safety kits and installing smoke alarms in a nearby neighborhood.

Smoke alarms and a home escape plan still remain the best protection for the early warning of a fire and will assist with a safe and timely exit. Smoke alarms with 9-volt batteries should be changed at least annually; so if you forgot to change them last fall or this spring - this is your opportunity. And remember, smoke alarms with ten year lithium batteries are now available where these products are sold.

Commissioner Ayers noted that this effort would not be possible without the ongoing support of Energizer Battery and The International Association of Fire Chief's national campaign sponsors, the American Red Cross Southeastern PA Chapter and PECO.

- **Persons who need a Smoke Alarm can call 3-1-1 or the Hotline at 215-686-1176**
- **The Home Fire Safety Check List may be obtained at any Philadelphia Fire Station.**
- **Check our websites: www.phila.gov/fire and freedomfromfire.com**
- **Learn how to become a volunteer Fire Safety Representative by calling 3-1-1 or 215-686-1382**