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**By John O'Reilly, Staff Writer**

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ROSELLE, NJ - The borough's fire department recently received a donation of fire alarms and fire blankets from Sears Department Stores to distribute to residents.

The Roselle Fire Department was one of 50 departments across the country to receive a portion of the 2,500 FirstAlert smoke alarms and 200 fire blankets, used to smother kitchen, garage, waste bin and clothing fires.

"We're thrilled to be taking part in this and grateful to Sears," said Deputy Fire Chief Paul Mucha. "Ultimately, this is going to save lives."

In a press release announcing the donation, Sears noted that 96 percent of households have a smoke alarm, but two-thirds of all reported home fire deaths occur in homes where there is no smoke alarm or the existing smoke alarms are not working.

"We hope our donation will help make an immediate impact in the community," said Sears District Manager Joe Coyle.

He added that the Roselle Fire Department has been in the forefront of promoting fire safety awareness.

Mucha noted that the department has been providing free fire alarms to single family dwellings for the past 10 years. He said the additions helped restock their dwindling supplies.

The department also was awarded a \$30,000 Homeland Security Fire Prevention Grant, allowing officials to buy smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.

Mucha hopes to purchase and distribute them by November.

"We are constantly trying to be proactive in protecting our valued citizens," he said.

Fire officials offered a number of additional fire safety tips to keep borough families safe:

- \* Change smoke alarm batteries every 6 months.
- \* Change smoke alarms at least every 10 years.
- \* Place a fire extinguisher on every level of the home and in key \* locations such as near a stove or fireplace.
- \* Develop and practice a home escape plan with all family members at least twice a year.

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