



City of New Bedford
Jonathan F. Mitchell, Mayor

City of New Bedford
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P R E S S R E L E A S E

New Bedford Fire Department awarded two fire safety education grants aimed at youth and seniors

New Bedford, Massachusetts – The Massachusetts Department of Fire Services has awarded two fire safety education grants to the New Bedford Fire Department, benefiting fire prevention education for students and senior citizens.

The Student Awareness Fire Education (S.A.F.E.) program grant was awarded to New Bedford to help educate students in Kindergarten and Grade 3 in New Bedford Public Schools. Since the S.A.F.E. program was implemented statewide in 1995, fire fatalities in persons under the age of 18 have fallen by 72 percent.

Fire safety education has a long history in New Bedford. In fact, the statewide program was modeled after a successful program launched in the early 1990s by New Bedford firefighters to bring fire and life safety education into New Bedford Public Schools. Over the years, there have been many real life examples that have underscored the importance of fire safety education for students. In 2014, two New Bedford students received the Massachusetts Young Hero award for putting into practice the life-saving knowledge and skills they learned from specially trained New Bedford firefighters.

A second grant awarded to the New Bedford Fire Department is aimed at connecting with the city's senior citizen population. According to the 2010 U.S. Census, 20 percent of the population in New Bedford is over the age of 65. This is the third year New Bedford has received this grant award. Through community partnerships and presentations at senior centers and various senior living facilities, New Bedford firefighters are working to make the Senior S.A.F.E. program as successful as its youth counterpart.

“The New Bedford Fire Department looks forward to continuing to work with the New Bedford Public Schools and Council on Aging with these important, educational programs,” said Fire Chief Michael Gomes. “We are committed to fire prevention education, and our trained firefighters enjoy working closely with seniors and students in our community.”

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