

Fire prevention events feature family fun, education

October 9-15 is Fire Prevention Week. This year's focus for fire safety involves the use of candles in the home. Home candle fires have risen steadily over the last decade. During 2001, an estimated 18,000 home fires in the U.S. were started by candles. The Charlotte Fire Department (CFD) wants Charlotteans to know the dangers of using candles in the home and has a variety of activities planned to highlight fire safety throughout the month of October.

7 p.m., Tues., Oct. 4
CFD Awards Ceremony
Police & Fire Training Academy
1770 Shopton Rd.

10 a.m., Wed., Oct 12
CFD Mascot Blaze's Birthday
Celebration & Music Video Debut
Highland Renaissance Academy
125 W. Craighead Rd.

CFD educational information will be on display at the Charlotte Mecklenburg Government Center Lobby, 600 East 4th Street during the month of October.

Also during the October, homeowners without working smoke alarms may call the Smoke Alarm Hotline **704.336.2697**, to see if they qualify for a free smoke alarm.

For more information about Fire Prevention activities, call the Charlotte Fire Investigation Task Force at **704.336.3970** or log on to www.charlottefire.org.



Blaze will celebrate his birthday Wednesday, October 12 as part of Fire Prevention Week.

Get Involved!

Ever wish you could personally redesign Charlotte's street network? Here's your chance. City staff have drafted Urban Street Design Guidelines (USDG) that will be presented to City Council this fall and, if adopted, will shape the way streets are built in Charlotte. Planners want the public's views on issues such as:

- Whether some streets should be narrower, to help slow traffic and improve neighborhoods
- Whether more (or different) traffic calming is needed for neighborhood streets

Drop in at any one of the following open house meetings being held:

Wed., Oct. 12
6 pm - 8:45 pm
University City Regional Library
301 E. WT Harris Blvd.

Fri., Oct. 14
11 am - 2 pm
Uptown (Main) Library
310 N. Tryon St.

Sat., Oct. 15
2 pm - 5 pm
Morrison Regional Library
7015 Morrison Blvd.



For more information, visit www.charmeck.org/departments/transportation or call the Charlotte Department of Transportation (CDOT) at **704.336.4119**.

Report highlights successes, challenges

The City of Charlotte recently released its Year End Performance Report for Fiscal Year 2005, which highlights the organization's performance from July 2004 to June 2005. It recognizes accomplishments as well as challenges the City faced in its delivery of quality public services and promotion of safety, health and quality of life for its citizens. Each year, City Council identifies focus areas to serve as the framework for allocating funds and resources. For FY2005, those areas included:

- Community Safety-Making Charlotte the safest large city in America
- Housing and Neighborhood Development-Creating great neighborhoods in which to live, work and play
- Restructuring Government-Providing the best services at the lowest cost
- Transportation-Being a premier city in the country for transportation choices
- Economic Development-Becoming the most prosperous and livable city for all citizens through quality economic development.

These priorities guide the organization in the delivery of City services. As a result, each City department develops annual business plans in support of the focus areas and sets a series of goals to achieve results. To monitor performance in service to its citizens, the City uses several strategic objectives. The following is a brief synopsis of the report, which highlights successes and challenges the City experienced in fulfilling those objectives:

Reduce Crime: Decrease crime with community oriented policing and other strategies that target crime categories or offenders

Success: Crime rates fell in several offense categories including rape (-6.4%), aggravated assault (-11.1%), larceny (-4.4%), and arson (-8.3%).

Challenge: During FY2005, vehicle thefts increased 7.73% since FY2004. To address auto thefts, the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department (CMPD) enhanced communication among patrol divisions, the burglary and auto theft units and crime analysts. This included increased distribution of alerts on potential suspects and use of computer technology to establish links between cases.

Increase Perception of Safety: Improve perception of safety by enhancing police community-solving partnerships, improving neighborhood appearance, and addressing neighborhood decay and nuisances.

Success: The residential fire rate, a measure of the number of fires per 1,000 population, remained at 0.97 in FY2005 for the second straight year, below the target of 1.2. The 0.97 fire rate is the lowest rate recorded by the Charlotte Fire Department (CFD) in three decades of tracking this measure.

Challenge: Continued growth in the City impacts traffic patterns and density which make it increasingly difficult to reach some areas of the City from existing fire stations within targeted response times.

Strengthen Neighborhoods: Deliver planning, infrastructure, environmental safety, and capacity building investments to improve and sustain the quality of life in neighborhoods.

Success: During FY2005 Neighborhood Development conducted 2,970 housing inspections and brought 2,793 homes into code compliance, or 127% achievement of its target of 2,200.

Challenge: 2004 Quality of Life Report identified 92 stable neighborhoods, short of its goal of 102 communities. However, all neighborhood areas improved in 2004.

Provide Transportation Choices: Provide programs and services that expand travel choices and increase use of alternative modes of transportation.

Success: Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS) achieved an 8.2% increase in transit ridership. This was the seventh year in a row that ridership increased and was above the target of a 4% increase.

Challenge: The FY2005 citywide street rating was 86.6 down from 87.8 in FY2004. Street rating target is 90. Rising resurfacing costs and limited resources impact improvement in the street rating.

Safeguard the Environment: Provide programs and services that protect the City's land, water, air and open space resources.

Success: The City exceeded federal air quality standards on a total of three days in three years (2002-2004). The target is to exceed no more than four days over three years.

Challenge: Charlotte-Mecklenburg Utilities (CMU) experienced sanitary overflows at a rate of 10.2 per 100 miles of pipe. The department's goal was 9.3 per 100 miles. However, the 10.2 rate was an improvement over the FY2004 rate of 10.6. CMU established the Grease Free Education program as well as the Root Control program to address this problem.

Promote Economic Opportunity: Provide programs and services that enhance the quality of life and make Charlotte an attractive location for quality jobs and businesses.

Success: Citywide hotel rooms booked by Visit Charlotte was 332,969 in FY2005, exceeding the target of 290,000.

Challenge: During FY2005, 676 new businesses located to Charlotte, which fell below the target of 700; compared to 810 in FY2004. However, this shortcoming was balanced by the creation of 7,025 jobs by the new businesses, which exceeded the City's target of 5,000 new jobs in FY2005.

A full copy of the performance report is available online at <http://citybudget.charmeck.org>. You also may obtain a copy of the report by logging on to <https://docstore.kinkos.com/cityofcharlotte>. There, you may arrange for a pick up at a local FedexKinkos store or have the document shipped to your address.