

A Call to Action! Cuts in the Fire Rescue Budget affect every one of us!

From: yadrean@gmail.com [mailto:yadrean@gmail.com] **On Behalf Of** Yolanda Adrean
Sent: Monday, December 08, 2008 6:28 AM
To: Jim King; Kim Jensen; Gordon Certain
Subject: A Call to Action! Cuts in the Fire Rescue Budget affect every one of us!

Dear Neighbors,

Through a series of budget cuts, the Atlanta Fire Rescue budget has been reduced from \$86 million to \$71 million in this fiscal year alone! This **18% budget cut** affects each and every one of us. The ability of Fire Rescue to uphold its mission and commitment to its citizens is being deeply compromised by these budget cuts. Our fire fighters protect us where we live, work, send our kids to school, shop or spend recreation time. Fire Rescue is responsible for fire, medical emergencies, homeland security, bomb threats, hazardous waste spills, building collapse, tunnel rescues and more. Here are specific examples of how these budget cuts affect each of us:

- Personnel levels have been **reduced by a total of 120 Fire Fighters**
- **Station 7 has been closed**
- **Squad 4 responsible for hazardous materials has been decommissioned and Ladder Truck 12 on DeKalb Avenue will be Blacked Out** from December 25, 2008 to June 30, 2009.
- **Station 23 on Howell Mill will be Blacked Out** from December 25, 2008 to June 30, 2009.
- Because of forced furloughs to bridge budget gaps, **several stations and engines are subject to "brown outs"** due to lack of fire fighter personnel. A brown out occurs when there are not enough fire fighters to properly man a truck or engine during a 24 hour shift. That means a fire truck or fire engine will be idle for the entire 24 hour shift.
- **These measures will affect critical response times** which put all of us at risk. For instance under the current budget cuts, response times will increase from the targeted 6 minutes to up to 10 minutes. That can literally cost a citizen or fire fighter's their life, or a total loss of your home or business.
- **The number of fire fighters assigned to each engine and truck has been reduced from 4 to 3.** This affects the fire fighters ability to effectively get a fire under control and the safety of victims and our fire fighters.

City Council members transferred \$1.2 million of the general fund to the Fire Rescue Budget. With that amount of money there would be no need for forced furloughs, and it would help get us closer to minimum standards and expected response times

The Mayor did ask for a tax increase earlier in the year and it was not approved. That coupled with the unprecedented economic downturn has forced the City to make some difficult decisions. I think we can all agree that the first and foremost mission of the City is to protect its citizens. Atlanta Fire Rescue and Atlanta Police Department should at the top of the list for budget funding.

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Please email our Mayor today and ask her to immediately release the funds City Council has set aside for the benefit of Fire Rescue. Her address is sfranklin@atlantaga.gov and her phone number is 404-330-6100.

Additionally! Please sign this petition urging action by our Mayor and elected officials <http://www.PetitionOnline.com/AFRD/petition.html>

You may also reach out to Council members by attending the City Council Committee on Public Safety on Tuesday December 9th at 3:00 PM and the Finance Committee on Wednesday December 10th at 1:00 PM. Both of these meetings are open to the public and take place at City Hall, 55 Trinity Avenue SW, Committee Room 2, Atlanta, GA 30303. The link to City Council is www.atlantaga.gov

Sincerely,

Taxpayers for Fund Restoration of Atlanta Fire Rescue