



News Release

National Safety Council · 1121 Spring Lake Drive · Itasca, IL 60143 · media@nsc.org

For Immediate Release
June 24, 2011

Contact: Kathy Lane
Communications Director
Phone: (630) 775-2307

Anchorage Receives Recertification of *Safe Communities America* Designation

Itasca, IL – As part of a worldwide movement to reduce injuries and save lives, Anchorage was one of the first cities in the United States to be designated an international Safe Community in 1998. Now, 13 years later, they have renewed their commitment to the people of Anchorage by completing the recertification process. The National Safety Council/*Safe Communities America* program oversaw the process as part of their responsibility as the U.S. Certifying Center of the World Health Organization Collaborating Center for Community Safety Promotion where this international movement began.

During the past 13 years, Anchorage community members have addressed numerous hazards facing the city. Some of their success stories include:

- Safety belt use is up to 86.8 percent in 2010 from 62 percent in 1999
- Youth booster seat use increased to 80 percent from 41 percent
- Anchorage underage drinking is declining

While Anchorage's safety improvements have been profound, the community feels there is always more they can do to make their city safer. This is why they sought to recertify Anchorage as a Safe Community.

“Community safety is a process of continuous improvement,” said Donna Stein-Harris, senior director of *Safe Communities America* for the National Safety Council. “We are pleased that Anchorage has continued its high level of commitment to the safety of its citizens through the recertification process.”

When Anchorage was first designated as a Safe Community it created a detailed safety plan with the help of local businesses, fire protection districts, park districts, law enforcement, public health organizations and schools. This initial plan has been evaluated and updated to meet the city's current needs to keep everyone safer.

“Completing the application helped all of us realize how far we have come and also to consider where we want to go,” said Marcia Howell, executive director of the [Alaska Injury Prevention Center](#). “Using reflectors, booster seats, safety belts and bike helmets are more of the norm now.”

“Change does happen, and it is fantastic to celebrate those successes,” Howell said.

The International Safe Community designation is awarded based on six indicators:

- A cross-sectional partnership responsible for the promotion of community safety
- Long-term sustainable programs for all genders, ages, environments and situations
- Programs targeting high-risk groups and environments
- Programs documenting the frequency and causes of injuries
- Evaluation measures to assess programs and the effects of change
- Ongoing participation in national and international Safe Communities networks

– more –

The redesignation ceremony will take place at noon on Wednesday, June 29 at the Memorial Block of the Park Strip in downtown Anchorage. After the ceremony, people are invited to walk to Mayor Dan Sullivan's office for the signing of the designation certificate. For more information, contact Marcia Howell at (907) 441-6746.

The new plan was approved by the National Safety Council, the designated Safe Communities Certifying Center in the United States for the World Health Organization Collaborating Center for Community Safety Promotion. For more information, please visit www.safecommunitiesamerica.org.

The National Safety Council (nsc.org) saves lives by preventing injuries and deaths at work, in homes and communities, and on the roads through leadership, research, education and advocacy.

###