



# News Release

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## **Dallas Receives Recertification of *Safe Communities America* Designation**

Itasca, IL – As part of a worldwide movement to reduce injuries and save lives, Dallas was the first city in the United States to be designated an international Safe Community in 1996. Now, 15 years later, they have renewed their commitment to the people of Dallas by completing the recertification process. The *Safe Communities America* program from the National Safety Council oversaw the process as part of its responsibility as the U.S. Certifying Center of the World Health Organization Collaborating Center for Community Safety Promotion where this international movement began.

Led by the Injury Prevention Center of Greater Dallas, the city has made numerous strides in safety during the past 15 years. Some of their success stories include:

- Installed approximately 26,000 smoke alarms through *Operation Installation*, providing protection to more than 42,000 people since 1999.
- 60% decrease in house fire death rates in high risk neighborhoods since *Operation Installation* was implemented, and a 40% decrease in the average number of house fire deaths for all of the city of Dallas.
- Distributed approximately 20,500 child passenger safety seats.
- 17% to 30% increase in correct child passenger safety seat use in high risk neighborhoods, and a 19% increase in correct child passenger safety seat use for all of the city of Dallas.

Moving forward, Dallas hopes to expand on past achievements as well as explore new safety endeavors.

“Because of our commitment to evaluation, we have been able to determine which strategies are producing the desired results and which ones are not,” said Shelli Stephens Stidham, director of IPC. “The strategies being implemented are more effective, which continues to make Dallas a safer city.”

This continual dedication to safety is precisely what the *Safe Communities* program is intended to foster.

“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 Dallas continues to improve its safety performance and protect its citizens by redesignating. As a large metropolitan city, Dallas has unique challenges, but it has been particularly successful in encouraging all sectors of its community to work together for the greater good.”

When Dallas was first certified as a Safe Community, it created a comprehensive 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.

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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

“I am proud and honored to be part of making Dallas the safest city to live, learn, work and play in Texas, the United States and the world,” Stephens-Stidham said.

The redesignation ceremony is scheduled for 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. on Wednesday, July 20, during a luncheon at Five Sixty by Wolfgang Puck in downtown Dallas. Several city officials will be in attendance.

The new plan was approved by the National Safety Council as the designated 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](http://www.safecommunitiesamerica.org).

The National Safety Council ([nsc.org](http://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.

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