

Working in the Community

Community outreach is a regular part of most firefighters' lives. The following list will help you focus outreach efforts on people ages 50 and older. It includes organizations to contact for help in identifying chapters in your area, setting up group presentations, and including fire safety information in home visits with people ages 50-plus. Many of the organizations hold regular meetings and would provide an opportunity for you to teach fire safety.

If you plan a group presentation, be sure to copy materials from the *Campaign Guide* or computer CD to distribute. When equipment is available, you may want to supplement your talk with PowerPoint slides on the computer CD.

For home visits, point out potential fire hazards in your hosts' homes and help them to draft a fire escape plan. Remember to bring plenty of materials to leave behind – and tell 50-plus Internet users about www.usfa.fema.gov/50Plus. When Meals on Wheels workers and visiting nurses join your *People 50-Plus* campaign, be sure they have plenty of leave-behind materials, too.

- **AARP:** Call 1-888-687-2277 for contact information for your local chapters.
- **Area Agencies on Aging (AAA):** Call the *Eldercare Locator* at 1-800-677-1116 for local divisions or visit www.eldercare.gov. The AAA coordinates many services for older adults.
- **Meals on Wheels Association of America:** Call 703-548-5558 or visit www.mowaa.org for your state contacts.
- **Retirement and Nursing Homes:** Plan a visit to your local facilities and bring enough materials to leave behind for the residents.
- **Senior Centers:** Ask to schedule a meeting and bring extra materials.
- **Faith-Based Organizations:** Contact your local churches, mosques and synagogues. Request the opportunity to present fire safety materials at regular sessions for members ages 50-plus. Conduct similar outreach through faith-based groups like the Knights of Columbus.
- **Visiting Nurse Associations of America:** Call 617-737-3200 or visit www.vnaa.org to identify local divisions. Provide these healthcare professionals with materials to distribute on home visits.
- **Local Library:** Many libraries have community areas where you can post the fact sheet or leave copies of the fliers with tips.
- **Community Center:** Many community centers have community boards for posting events or information. Post the flier or fact sheet on the boards and leave copies so that residents can take them home.
- **Grocery Stores:** Contact local corporate offices of grocery chains and independent stores. Many are quite community-oriented, and will welcome your request to post the campaign flier and fact sheet on consumer bulletin boards.