



City of Madison Fire Department

News Release



Date: January 21, 2009

Released By: **Joel DeSpain** – Public Information Officer, MPD
(608) 266-4897
Lori Wirth – Public Information Officer, MFD
(608) 266-5947 or (608) 575-4943

Landlord Increases Safety Education in Student Housing *Initiates Prevention Through Education and Personal Responsibility Program*

In the wake of multiple incidents over the past 18 months, safety and security in Madison's student housing has become a topic of increased interest.

Dave Wood owns rental property in Madison. He's decided to do something about housing safety by providing brightly-colored information on Fire Safety, Building Security, and Personal Safety to all of his tenants. But more than just posting the information, rental consultants will go over the poster, present a flyer of the same info and have dialogue on the various safety points, asking tenants to help by taking responsibility for their own safety.

While Wood originally printed the posters for use in his family's properties, Madison Property Management, Inc. (MPM) has adopted the project and have started installing 500 of the posters for other properties they manage for other owners. Wood estimates the reach could be in the 4-5,000 range of the student population.

Wood says he takes some inspiration from this week's inaugural address. "Our new President recently asked for 'responsibility on the part of business and government.' This prevention program applies to houses, flats or high rises. Similarly, for the Prevention through Education and Personal Responsibility Program to work, in addition to asking owners and managers to be responsible, we need the apartment residents to take personal responsibility for their own safety. Getting this last responsibility involvement of the resident provides the ultimate prevention benefit. Without it, making preventative gains will be tough".

Fire Chief Debra Amesqua applauded the initiative. "It's exciting and gratifying to receive this kind of support from the business community," said Fire Chief Debra Amesqua. "This initiative sets a clear expectation for a culture of safety across the community."

Police Chief Noble Wray added his praise for the activity. "The City of Madison Police Department encourages and embraces this type of community partnership. We firmly believe we must all work together to keep our neighborhoods safe."

--END--