



METRO FIRE RECEIVES KIDS' PLATES GRANT

By Jill Conner – Public Education Technician – Metro Fire

Every child has the right to grow up healthy and safe. We at Metro Fire have placed a high priority on injury prevention, especially for children.

One of the other main areas of our injury prevention focus is drowning prevention. Each year in the Sacramento area, far too many children and young adults fall victim to drowning or near drowning.



One way that Metro Fire is working to prevent drowning is through our life jacket loan out program, Operation River Safe. Every year on the major summer holidays of Labor Day, 4th of July, and Memorial Day, Metro Fire, in conjunction with C.E.R.T. (Citizens Emergency Response Team) sets up life jacket loan out stations at places along the river in Sacramento. When people come to the river to swim or raft, they can borrow a properly fitted life jacket from one of our loan out stations, use it all day and return the jacket to us, all at no charge.

We also have life jacket hand outs at our Fire Stations near the rivers. You can go to one of these Fire Stations and the firefighters there will fit you with a life jacket for you to borrow for the day. Last year we passed out over 1100 life jackets of all sizes to all ages from infant to adult. Unfortunately, we only received 400 of them back.

This is where Kids' Plates comes into the picture. Kids' Plates are the unique California license plates that include symbols like a heart or a star in a personal message. The small extra amount of money that these plates cost is given out in the form of grants to organizations that work to prevent child injury and child abuse.



Metro Fire applied for and received a Kids' Plates grant to purchase \$3000.00 worth of personal floatation devices, specifically sized for children. This grant and the purchase of the life jackets will insure that we can continue this life saving program for another year.

If you want to help to support injury prevention and child abuse prevention programs in California, buy a Kids' Plate for your vehicle or visit Kids' Plates at kidsplates.org or call 1-800-HEY-KIDS.

For further information on our life jacket loan out program, and for a list of the stations that loan out life jackets, you can visit the Metro Fire website at smfd.ca.gov or call the Community Services Division at (916) 566-4000.

