



Winchester Fire and Rescue

FIRE, RESCUE, HAZARDOUS MATERIALS & EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS

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INFORMATIONAL BULLETIN IB-10014

TO: All Personnel
FROM: Scott Cullers, Fire Chief
RE: Walmart Gift Cards
DATE: December 6, 2010

Winchester Fire and Rescue Department has long recognized that some situations we encounter require more than suppression and EMS intervention. Many of the citizens that we see on incidents may need a supporting hand after being dealt a personal or devastating event.

In many instances, a family may have lost all of their belongings, have no support group, have no access to cash or their checkbook, and/or no financial means of immediate recovery. It may be you observing a residence during an EMS incident in which an elderly person or child is in need of basic items such as milk or food. We all have experienced the hopelessness in the faces of the people we serve and know how difficult it is to walk away or say "Let some other agency handle..."

The intent of the WFRD gift card program is to offer a citizen who is recognized, by any firefighter, to be in need of basic items such as clothing, food, or medication. A small monetary amount (\$10) to immediately purchase small items without having to wait for insurance adjusters or other forms of assistance that may ease the loss. We will work with the services that the American Red Cross already provides.

Battalion 6 and Chief 6 will carry the gift cards that can be issued on a case by case basis. Each of you will be empowered with making this decision. If you see someone in need that you feel warrants this service, contact Battalion 6 and/or Chief 6 for approval. The gift cards are not designed to be used frivolously, and must be documented on the Firehouse incident reporting system under the narrative section.

It must be stressed that NO Fire and Rescue department funds are being used for this program. The money is coming from a private source. This will be a test program, and will be evaluated for its effectiveness after the first of the New Year. Currently, there will be \$200 in gift cards (\$10 per card) maintained as the balance. I would ask no more than two (2) \$10 cards be dispersed to any one person. I fully understand that each situation is different and each need may be different. I thank each of you for your support and initiative.