



SAN FRANCISCO FIRE DEPARTMENT
Public Information Office

2/2/2011

Media Advisory

1300 Hrs

For Immediate Release PST
Mindy Talmadge – 415 – 558-3403
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PUBLIC RESPONSE TO *WORKING ESSENTIALS* COLLECTION AMAZING

In mid-November, the San Francisco Fire Department partnered with a nonprofit organization, *WORKING ESSENTIALS*, in a Collection/Drive to assist homeless individuals in their efforts to obtain and retain employment. Reaching out to the hearts of San Francisco's residents, Fire Stations opened their doors to receive donations of job readiness items to help the homeless maintain their personal hygiene. The lack of accessibility to job readiness items is a major barrier to employment for individuals who are homeless.

"I can't tell you how quickly people responded to the announcement of the drive", said Fire Department spokesperson Mindy Talmadge. "Collection bins at some Fire Stations were full within the first week."

Vera Lee-Honen, coordinator of the *WORKING ESSENTIALS* program said, "We collected over 500 pounds of soap, 300 pounds of shampoo and conditioner, 600 toothbrushes, and 70 pounds of toothpaste. It has been AMAZING!!!! I have never seen so much support. Our warehouse is literally overflowing with donations". Lee-Honen estimates that 2,500 to 3,000 people will benefit from the generosity of the public during this drive.

For more information about *WORKING ESSENTIALS*, contact Vera Lee-Honen at (415)733-0990, ext. 605 or by email at vlee-honen@toolworks.org

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