



*Serving firefighters, their families  
and their communities*

## **Supplying Aid to Victims of Emergency (SAVE)**

### **Questions and Answers**

#### **What is the California Fire Foundation?**

The California Fire Foundation, a non-profit 501 (c)(3) organization, provides emotional and financial assistance to families of fallen firefighters, firefighters and the communities they protect. Formed in 1987 by California Professional Firefighters, the California Fire Foundation's mandate includes an array of survivor and victim assistance programs and community initiatives.

#### **What is SAVE?**

Supplying Aid to Victims of Emergency (SAVE) is a program that enables first responders to offer immediate relief and comfort to victims of catastrophic loss due to fire or other natural disaster. Incident commanders on scene of a fire or other natural disaster will be able to provide \$250 gift cards to those who have suffered a minimum of 25% damage to the property where they reside. The program is designed to aid victims of: fire, earthquake, mudslide/landslide, and flood.

#### **What is its objective?**

When a family's place of residence is damaged, they are often in shock and confused about what to do next – they may have lost identification, credit cards or other valuables. Many times, they are left without basic necessities such as medicine or food. SAVE provides an "arm around the shoulder" by offering an immediate financial assistance for clothing, lodging, meals, or other vital essentials.

#### **How does it work?**

SAVE cards will be carried by designated incident commanders.

- Once the incident has been brought under control, the determination is made as to the extent of the damage.
- If the property where the victim resides is found to meet or exceed 25% loss, the incident commander will call the automated system to activate the card.
- Once activated, the incident commander will present the card to one of the victims.
- No more than three days following the incident, the incident commander will fill out and submit the report.

#### **Is there a separate card given to every person in a house/apartment or just one card per household?**

Only one SAVE card is issued per household. A SAVE card may be issued to homeowners or renters, as long as the minimum amount of damage has been incurred. Businesses are not eligible.



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### **What about apartment fires or other multi-family structures?**

The resident or family of each unit that exhibits 25% or more property loss is eligible to receive a SAVE card.

### **Where does the money come from?**

The SAVE program is financed entirely through private and corporate donations made through the California Fire Foundation.

### **Do all firefighters carry SAVE cards?**

Only designated incident commanders carry SAVE cards. SAVE cards are issued by the incident commander on scene. Once the incident is stabilized and a determination is made of a 25% or greater property loss for a household, the incident commander will present the card to a member of the household.

### **Is this only available to certain departments or can any fire department qualify?**

Participation in SAVE is open to all California fire departments, whether they are paid professional firefighters or a volunteer force.

### **How does a department get involved with SAVE?**

Departments wishing to participate in SAVE are obliged to agree to a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) detailing the requirements and obligations. The MOU must be signed by both a Fire Chief and President for the Respective Bargaining Unit (s) or Association (s) for Firefighters (or Lead Representative where there is no President).

### **Why is our department participating in SAVE?**

As first responders, fire departments see the devastation that can be caused by a catastrophic fire or disaster. They also witness the anguish it brings to communities and the helplessness it creates. While the first priority is to stop the spread of the fire, the SAVE program offers the opportunity to go above and beyond the call by helping fire/disaster victims start the healing process.

### **Is anyone eligible to receive a SAVE card as long as they incurred the eligible level of damage?**

The program's goal is to provide comfort and relief to fire and disaster victims, based on the level of damage incurred to their household, regardless of their location or property value.

### **Why are firefighters the ones giving these out?**

Firefighters are uniquely positioned to provide comfort to the victims of a catastrophic disaster. They are the first on the scene when a fire or major disaster strikes. Because their job is to limit loss of life and property, they are closest to the physical toll of a disaster. Firefighters also bear



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witness to emotional toll of a catastrophic fire or disaster, and they are often the ones victims turn to for answers. Firefighters are the best ones to offer that small bit of comfort ... that “arm around the shoulder.”

**Doesn't the Red Cross offer this kind of support?**

In no way is SAVE intended to replace the critical relief services the Red Cross provides. However, SAVE provides immediate assistance following a disaster, while other relief and assistance programs can take more time to be implemented. SAVE is an additional helping hand from the fire service, and can make the immediate aftermath of a disaster more manageable.

**How does someone make a contribution to the SAVE program?**

Individuals wishing to contribute to SAVE may do so through the California Fire Foundation, either by check or online at [www.cafirefoundation.org](http://www.cafirefoundation.org). Any donations should indicate that it is intended for SAVE, either on the check or in the online comments section.

**Who can sponsor the SAVE program?**

Corporate sponsors are welcome to partner with the Foundation to support this program. Additionally, individuals and/or businesses can underwrite SAVE in their community. Contact Director Elena Ruiz, with the California Fire Foundation at [er Ruiz@cpf.org](mailto:er Ruiz@cpf.org).