Social Services Receives Grant to Increase Homeless Services, Leverages $1 Million for Local Families in Crisis

The Department of Social Services (DSS) got the good news last month that it received a CalWORKs (California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids) Housing Support grant of $376,625 and it is already getting its program up and running.

“Every child deserves a home and even one child homeless is too many,” says DSS Director Elliott Robinson. “Families who lose their apartment or home too often don’t have the support they need to overcome that crisis. With this small grant, we hope to demonstrate to lawmakers the high value of investing in housing supports for homeless families.”

The proposal DSS submitted to the State of California for grant funding is for the Department to work in partnership with the Housing Resource Center to build a county-wide program to offer rapid re-housing and homeless prevention. DSS will leverage an
additional $623,375 from the CalWORKs operational funds to supplement the Housing Support grant so that a total of $1 million will be available for this effort. The program will focus on families who are eligible for CalWORKs and who are either homeless or imminently facing eviction. The housing support program will include case management services, landlord outreach, housing search help, financial counseling and employment support.

The first review of the plan was at the Health and Human Services Committee meeting this week as it makes its way to the Board of Supervisors for final review.

“Much more needs to be done about the cost and availability of affordable housing for families in our community, but this new investment in stability for families and children who face homelessness is the kind platform families need to overcome crises,” says Robinson. “With this seed money, we will continue to work with our partners around the State to keep resources for family housing support growing.”

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**Popular Health Department Event Continues to Safely Collect Used Automotive Supplies**

When you have your car oil and filter changed, have you ever wondered what happens to those used supplies?

Companies that do automotive work are required to safely dispose of that waste. But what about the many people who are ‘Do It Yourselves’ and change car oil themselves? For those folks, help comes from the Health Department’s Oil Filter Exchange events.

The exchange events are designed to increase used oil and oil filter collection at certified collection centers such as AutoZone and O’Reilly’s stores. The most recent event was in Marina last month and 39 used oil filters were collected in just four hours.

“Most people brought two filters,” says Juan Quevedo, Environmental Health Specialist, who manages the exchange events. “As part of the exchange, the County purchases new filters to anyone who recycles theirs, so last month we bought 39 new oil filters.”
During the event, the first 25 people to participate also received a new oil filter, an oil filter wrench, an oil filter drainer, a funnel and an approved used oil container for curbside collection.

Quevedo says he also makes sure he is accessible for anyone who wants to talk about the importance of recycling and he hands out lots of red oil rags after conversations. He says frequently people are surprised that the program is hosted by the Health Department.

“The benefit of having an Environmental Health staff person like myself at these events is that I can provide important information, such as how to handle your used oil and filters if you can’t make it to a certified collection center. However, the most common question I get is ‘When is your next oil filter exchange?’”

Quevedo has been getting the word out about the exchange events on the Health Department’s Facebook page and at Health Department events - looking for those home oil changers. Whenever he is at AutoZone and spies folks buying oil and filters, he reminds them to bring back their used items.

“Lots of people actually came back with their used oil filters,” he says.

Retiring Supervisor Receives Honors, Thanks

As 2nd District Supervisor Lou Calcagno gets closer to his final days in office, groups and organizations are making sure this local businessman and politician is thanked for his long-standing efforts and achievements for the community.
“I have been too busy being Supervisor to start counting down the days but I am certainly looking forward to spending more time with my wife and family,” says Calcagno. “I appreciate all the thoughtful gestures that have been made on my behalf but somehow I feel as though I should be the one thanking them for giving me their support over the last 34 years and for allowing me to serve them as a public official.”

Members of the Commission on the Status of Women recognized Calcagno this month for his long standing support of the Commission’s mission during his tenure.

Other honors given to the Supervisor recently included recognition of his service to the county and the agricultural community from the Monterey County Farm Bureau (photo above).

Assembly Member Luis Alejo presented the Supervisor with a State Assembly resolution marking his many years of service (photo right).