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Fire Department Conducts Search and Rescue Training

Margate, FL February 14, 2006 – Throughout the month of February there will be lots of activity at 5750 Margate Boulevard, a building that has stood vacant for several months. In December 2005 the Margate Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) purchased the building that neighbors Margate City Hall. At the end of February 2006 it will be demolished, but not before the Margate Fire Department uses the opportunity for Search and Recovery Training.

“We are very pleased that the CRA could make this building available for such a unique training opportunity,” said Executive Director for the CRA, Marsa Detscher. “The demolition of the building will make way for future expansion of City Hall as shown in the Charrette Plan.” The Charrette Plan was developed as a result of a public process involving residents, businesses, and elected officials for the City of Margate. On February 13, 2006 the CRA Board voted to grade and sod the site after demolition is completed. The City will then plan the future use of the site.

Fire Department Training Officer, Lieutenant Rob Reul, explained that the Fire Department had previously asked the CRA to notify them if any buildings they owned would be demolished. “I asked them to always consider us for fire training. It’s hard to get buildings to train in, not many are going down in this area.” It is a “very good training opportunity for our people. It allows them to be better prepared for the real life situation,” said Reul.



From left to right: Fire Fighter/Paramedics Vince Ploplis, Isaac Potts, Kevin DeLaCova, and Lieutenant Bill Strange

There will be two different types of training. During the week of February 7 the interior fire drills began. In these drills, the Fire Department will simulate a fire on the second floor of a commercial structure office building. There will be simulated smoke, or what Ruel refers to as “Hollywood smoke” and teams of firefighters will advance hose lines and attack the simulated fire.

There will be no real fire in the building as this is not compliant with National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1403, and safety comes first. As Reul explained, “fire doesn't care if we're training or not.”

On February 17th, the demolition of the building will begin. That is when the Fire Department plans to use a training scenario that simulates a collapse at a preschool. They will respond with Technical Rescue personnel and then call in a special Technical Rescue team, which is based in Sunrise, Florida. The teams will search and recover mannequins that will be planted in the rubble. This type of training will last through the 19th. The rehearsal will happen just as though it would if a similar real-life scenario had occurred.

The City of North Lauderdale Fire Department will also be participating in the opportunity to train during the demolition of the building.

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Margate Firefighters conduct training with simulated smoke and charged fire hose inside the building at 5750 Margate Boulevard