



NEWS RELEASE October 16, 2013

City Encourages Assistance for Displaced Hotel Fire Victims

To assist the dozens of persons left homeless by Saturday's fire at the Town Center Inn, the public is encouraged to make financial donations to either the American Red Cross "Disaster Relief, Santa Maria Fire" fund, or to the Good Samaritan Shelter in Santa Maria.

Approximately 45 former hotel residents are being temporarily housed at the Red Cross Shelter in the City's Minami Community Center. Anyone with ability to provide shelter to any of the displaced individuals is encouraged to contact the City, the Red Cross, or the Good Samaritan Shelter. The residential downtown hotel was occupied by many low-income adults including some with disabilities, and many of them escaped the swift-moving fire with nothing but the clothes on their backs.

Financial donations may be made online at www.redcross.org or by contacting the Red Cross at its Santa Barbara County Chapter office, at (805) 679-6671. The American National Red Cross is registered as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Contributions are tax-deductible.

Donations also may be made to the Good Samaritan Shelter of Santa Maria, located at 401 W. Morrison Street. To donate online, visit www.goodsamshelter.net and click on the "Donate Now" box on the webpage. Donations received during this crisis are directed to assisting the fire victims. Or, donations designated to "Hotel Fire Victims" may be mailed to the Good Samaritan Shelter, P.O. Box 5908, Santa Maria CA 93456.

The early morning Saturday fire caused more than \$1.4 million in damages. During the fire, people attempting to escape the flames and smoke were hanging out of windows and were rescued by firefighters and police officers. Seven residents were taken to hospitals for smoke inhalation and minor injuries. Santa Maria Police arrested Amos Andrews, 57, of Santa Maria, on suspicion of arson and attempted murder, and he is being prosecuted by the District Attorney's Office.

Questions may be directed to the City Manager's Office at 925-0951 ext. 372, or to Loren Leidinger Avila with the Red Cross at 543-0696, or to Emergency Shelter Manager Kirsten Cahoon at the Good Samaritan Shelter at 354-9307.

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