

February 12, 2009

**Media Contacts:**

Kevin Enright, Director, Office of Public Information, 410-313-2022

*Rescheduled from January 28 – cancellation due to inclement weather*

## **Department of Fire and Rescue Services Seeks Community Feedback**

ELLICOTT CITY, MD – The Howard County Department of Fire and Rescue Services invites members of the community to participate in one of two community focus groups on Tuesday, March 3. The first focus group will be held from 12 to 1 p.m. at Howard Community College's Gateway Campus, 6751 Columbia Gateway Drive in Columbia. The second focus group will be held from 7 to 8 p.m. at the Glenwood Community Center, 2400 Route 97 in Cooksville. These sessions are the first step in the Department's effort to develop a strategic plan to help better meet the needs of citizens.

"Job one for local government is insuring the safety and well-being of our citizens, so it is imperative that we hear from those we serve," said County Executive Ken Ulman. "We need to listen, be responsive and then be held accountable."

The Center for Public Safety Excellence will guide focus group participants through an exercise intended to prioritize emergency and non-emergency services from a "customer" perspective. Additionally, participants will have an opportunity to provide general comments and suggest expectations about the Department's role and service in Howard County. Previous experience with the Department's services is not required.

Space is limited to 100 participants for each session and while registration is preferred, it is not required. To register, please contact the Department at 410-313-6000 between the hours of 8 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. Registration may also be made through email to [focus@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:focus@howardcountymd.gov) by providing your name, community affiliation and the session you plan to attend.

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