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## **For Immediate Release**

# **NEW INTERACTIVE ROBOT TO TEACH CRITICAL FIRE SAFETY TO ONSLOW COUNTY CHILDREN**

### *Robot to be Unveiled at Local Elementary School*

JACKSONVILLE, N.C. (Oct. 23, 2009) – According to the U.S. Fire Administration, an estimated 2,800 children are injured and 850 killed each year in residential fires nationwide. Now, thanks a \$6,500 donation, Onslow County Fireman's Association and its member fire departments will be able to enhance their fire safety outreach efforts to young children.

The grant was awarded jointly by SIA Group, an insurance agency headquartered in Jacksonville, and Fireman's Fund Insurance Company.

Grant funds have purchased an interactive robot that will be used to teach critical fire safety lessons to children from pre-kindergarten through fifth grade. The robot, designed as a fire hydrant, receives commands from a remote control and can maneuver around a room as it interacts with kids. It has a two-way wireless voice system that allows the operator to both talk and listen to the children.

"While teaching fire safety in group settings, the interactive nature of the robot really helps draw childrens' attention, making them more likely to absorb key fire safety messages," said Onslow County Fireman's Association President Jerry Davis. "As children become educated, they often pass lessons learned on to family members in their household. Ultimately, this helps make the whole community safer."

The unveiling of the robot will take place during a press conference that will discuss fire safety efforts in Onslow County. This will immediately be followed by a fire safety presentation to students at Meadowview Elementary School, where the robot will interact with the children.

**Date/Time:**  
**Tuesday, Oct. 27th**  
**9:45 a.m.**

**Location:**  
**Meadowview Elementary School**  
**1026 Fire Tower Rd.**  
**Jacksonville, N.C.**

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"Our presence in Onslow County dates back to 1975, so we're proud to be able to support the county in a meaningful way," said Bill Mills, vice president of SIA Group. "In this economic climate, fire service organizations are dealing with very tight budgets, and fire safety programs, unfortunately, are often cut or reduced."

The grant package is part of a nationwide philanthropic program funded by Fireman's Fund Insurance Company. The program is designed to provide needed equipment, training and educational tools to fire service organizations. Since 2004, Fireman's Fund has issued grants to over 1,500 different organizations totaling more than \$24 million. Independent insurance agents, like SIA Group, that sell Fireman's Fund products are able to direct these grants to fire service organizations.

### **About SIA Group**

SIA Group is a full-service insurance agency with seven offices throughout North Carolina. Founded in 1975, the firm offers a complete range of insurance products including risk management consultation, loss control, surety bonds programs, life insurance, and employee benefit packages. SIA Group is one of North Carolina's fastest growing insurance organizations with more than 110 employees. The firm was listed as a "Top 100 Privately Held Property Casualty Agency" by the *Insurance Journal* in 2006, 2007 and 2008. SIA Group has offices located in Raleigh, Jacksonville, Greenville, New Bern, Wallace, Burgaw, and Charlotte. For more information, visit [www.siagroup.net](http://www.siagroup.net).

### **About Fireman's Fund**

Fireman's Fund Insurance Company is a premier property and casualty insurance company providing personal and commercial insurance products nationwide. It is rated 'AA-' by Standard & Poor's Rating Services. Founded in 1863 with a mission to support firefighters, Fireman's Fund continues this effort today through its national philanthropic work. Fireman's Fund is a member of the Allianz Group (NYSE: AZ), one of the world's largest providers of insurance and other financial services. For more information, visit [www.firemansfund.com](http://www.firemansfund.com)

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