



POLICE DEPARTMENT

155 Center Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95060 • (831) 420-5810 • Fax (831) 420-5811
Kevin Vogel, Chief of Police

Santa Cruz Police and Fire Departments Join Forces with the American Red Cross on ‘Battle of the Badges’ Blood Drive

Peace officers and firefighters in Santa Cruz are competing to see who can give the most blood at the “Battle of the Badges” blood drive on January 14. The drive takes place at Depot Park in the Freight Building on Center Street from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. This will be the first time the American Red Cross has held such a blood drive in Santa Cruz County.

It is an opportunity for all badge carrying personnel, as well as their family, friends and other local residents, to have a positive impact on the community by holding a friendly competition to see who can donate the most blood and ultimately help save the most lives.

“Our participation in this drive will have a direct effect on the availability of blood for accident victims, cancer patients, premature babies and burn patients,” said Rob Oatey, President of Santa Cruz Fire Fighters Association Local 1716. “We can also show some fire department pride when we bring in the most donors.”

While the fire department expects to win the competition, Sgt. Michael Harms with the Santa Cruz Police Department, says not so fast.

“In Santa Cruz, it is virtually impossible to go anywhere without seeing someone you know,” said Harms, Santa Cruz Police Department. “Any one of us may need blood one day, something as police we unfortunately see in our job. This battle is one where all of us win. We’ll call the fire department winners even though they won’t collect as much blood as the police department will.”

As Harms says, everyone comes out a winner from this battle.

American Red Cross Northern California Blood Services CEO Jeff Meyer said, “We really appreciate the Santa Cruz police and fire departments for taking on this challenge. January is nationally recognized as Volunteer Blood Donor Month to thank donors and to bring awareness to the community about the need for blood, and we hope to see new donors take part in the Battle of the Badges. We look forward to making this an annual event.”

There will be two awards given: One for the department that brings in the greatest number of donors and one for the department who brings in the most donors from their own organization.

Individuals who are 17 years of age (16 with parental permission in some states), meet height and weight requirements (at least 110 pounds based on height) and are in generally good health may be eligible to donate blood. Call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767) or visit redcrossblood.org (Sponsor Code: BATTLESC) to schedule an appointment.

The Red Cross Northern California Blood Services Region has been collecting blood for the community since the late 1940s. The region supplies blood to 30 Bay Area hospitals, and must collect more than 300 pints of blood each day in order to meet hospital needs.