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Code Enforcement Toy Drive & Giveaway



Perris Code Enforcement Officers Al Rojas and Kim Esteva gather Christmas presents to deliver to 12 underprivileged families.

Members of the City's Code Enforcement Division made Christmas a little brighter for 12 underprivileged and deserving families, delivering toys and good cheer to residences from one end of Perris to the other and receiving grateful thanks at each stop along the way.

Code Enforcement Supervisor Robert Trejo and officers Al Rojas, John Parker, Daniel Singleton, Daniel Soarez and Kim Esteva gathered early on the morning of Dec. 21 to take wrapped packages of personal care items and toys like soccer balls, Legos, stuffed animals, board games and race cars to brighten the Yuletide.

Perris City employees donated to purchase the gifts. Perris school officials provided the names of some of the beneficiaries while Code Enforcement employees learned of others while performing their on-the-job duties. They made their deliveries Dec. 21.

"We're not here just to enforce municipal codes," Trejo said. "We're here for the community as well. We're thinking of them at this time of the year and we want to share as much joy as we can."

Esteva, who fields telephone calls from the public and processes walk-in payments and inquiries, wrapped most of the gifts. Esteva said she's gone through hard times herself so she knows the sadness parents feel when there's little under the holiday tree.

"It's someplace you don't want to be," she said.

Making the rounds

The first stop took place at the home of Cassandra and Fernando Perez, who have three children. Cassandra Perez, 29, quit her full-time job at a donut shop to care for her husband, who suffers from epileptic seizures. That left the family's finances short at Christmas.

Casandra Perez summed up her feelings at the sight of the Code Enforcement Santas in three words: "Happy, relieved, blessed."

"When times are tough, the City of Perris is there to help us," she said. "This helps. It helps a lot."

Fernando Perez, 40, was equally grateful.



The Code Enforcement Santas who made the holidays a little brighter for a dozen Perris families: Supervisor Robert Trejo, Officers John Parker, Daniel Singleton, Kim Esteva, Al Rojas and Daniel Soarez.

"Thank you for blessing us," he said as the Code Enforcement crew loaded up and continued spreading the gifts and the love.

Stop number two took the Christmas elves to the home of Jay Koch, 59, who lives in a motor home with his daughter and three grandchildren, ages 13, 10, and 5. Koch injured his back while working at a masonry company, retrained himself to become a truck driver and then suffered devastating back injuries in a traffic accident.

"As of right now, I have nothing to give them for Christmas," Koch told the Code Enforcement crew. "I am so appreciative—the grandkids are going to be so happy. It's awesome."

Then it was off to the home of Shanteon Shoals, who is raising four sons as a single mom. She worked two jobs to support her family but was forced to give one up when stress and other health concerns overwhelmed her. She still maintains a full-time job at a supermarket near Ontario.

"This is an incredible day," she said.

Her sons—Semaj, 15, twins Marcellus and Jeremiah, 14, and Anaji, 11—didn't wait until Christmas to open their gifts. The wrappings disappeared before the Perris team left for their next delivery.

The City's kind gesture left mom almost speechless.

"Wow," Shanteon Shoals said. "This shows people still care."

Media Contact

Joe Vargo
Public Information Officer
951-943-6100
jvargo@cityofperris.org



Perris City Hall
101 N. D Street
Perris, CA 92570

Hours: Mon. - Fri. 8 am - 6pm

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