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PRESS RELEASE

Mayors Announce Installation of New Security Monitors in Vacant Buildings

SCHENECTADY – Mayor Gary McCarthy was joined by mayors from around the state to shed light on the pervasive issue of vacant buildings. The cities announced the installation of new security monitors in vacant buildings will be evaluated to deter activity such as break-ins and incendiary fires.

The solar-powered CASPER security devices are capable of fire and motion detection that can immediately alert first responders. The acronym CASPER stands for Completely Autonomous Solar-Powered Event Responder.

"Vacant and abandoned buildings pose a serious public safety threat to many communities across the country," **Mayor McCarthy said**. "Through code enforcement, demolitions, and rehabs, the complexity of these issues can take years to tackle. Meanwhile neighbors are vulnerable to dangerous hazards posed by these buildings. These monitors have the ability to rapidly and proactively protect neighbors by alerting first responders to fires and trespassers."

Mayor McCarthy made the announcement alongside Albany Mayor Kathy Sheehan and Troy Mayor Patrick Madden. In addition to the three Capital Region cities, Syracuse Mayor Ben Walsh and Binghamton Mayor Rich David will also be evaluating the CASPER devices.

"We monitor vacant and abandoned properties, but our real focus is helping cities protecting neighbors and first responders," said **Nathan Armentrout, Founder and CEO of CASPER Security**. "Fires and trespassing can quickly escalate into dangerous situations and, until now, cities didn't have a lot of options to quickly reduce the risk or improve safety in neighborhoods. CASPER Security gives cities a brand new tool to help address safety issues that arise from vacant and abandoned properties."

CASPER Security is based in Louisville, Kentucky, and was founded after winning a civic innovation competition in 2015 focused on addressing vacant property fires.

A team of civic hackers developed CASPER and soon after piloted 10 devices across 15 homes for six months, culminating in over 100 successful tests, two real life confirmed detections, and zero false positives. Following the successful pilot, Louisville expanded the program to more homes to ensure the safety of Louisville families living next to abandoned homes.

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