



Laurel Volunteer Rescue Squad

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LOCAL FIRE DEPARTMENT RECEIVES \$84,280 THROUGH FEMA'S FY 2008 ASSISTANCE TO FIREFIGHTERS GRANT PROGRAM

(Laurel, Maryland) –Today, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) awarded an \$84,280 Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) to the Laurel Volunteer Rescue Squad. The funding will be used to purchase additional fire, rescue and emergency medical equipment, including portable radios, cribbing and hydraulic tools for use on auto accidents, saws and fans for use on fire calls, ropes and hardware for use on technical rescue incidents, and specialized meters that can measure carbon monoxide levels in the bloodstream of those exposed to the toxic gas.

Fire Chief David Morgan, an 18-year member who oversees all emergency operations within the organization, stated "We are thrilled that FEMA will help us offset the costs of providing this equipment and interoperability for the Greater Laurel area, and we thank our local congressional delegation for all of their hard work to ensure support and funds for this program. The new equipment will enable us to provide the required tools and safety equipment needed when our volunteer members serve the public safety needs of the area."

LVRS members provide almost 8,000 hours of volunteer service each month, saving the local community over \$6,000,000 yearly through their volunteer service.

Nationally, the AFG awards, which will be distributed in phases, will ultimately provide approximately \$560 million to fire departments and nonaffiliated emergency medical service organizations throughout the country.

AFG awards aim to enhance response capabilities and to more effectively protect the health and safety of the public with respect to fire and other hazards. The grants enable local fire departments and emergency medical services organizations to purchase or receive training, conduct first responder health and safety programs, and buy equipment and response vehicles.

"The Assistance to Firefighters Grants program has been instrumental in building capacity and providing needed resources for our nation's firefighters," said FEMA Administrator R. David Paulison. "From the purchase of equipment to first responder training, the AFG program has helped improve response capabilities and saved lives and property in communities throughout the United States."

Since 2002, AFG has provided over \$3.6 billion in grants to fire departments and first responder organizations to purchase response equipment, personal protective equipment, vehicles and fire prevention activities. AFG is administered cooperatively by two FEMA components: the Grants Program Directorate and the United States Fire Administration.

The full list of FY 2008 AFG recipients and other information is posted on the AFG website (www.firegrantsupport.com).

FEMA coordinates the federal government's role in preparing for, preventing, mitigating the effects of, responding to, and recovering from all domestic disasters, whether natural or man-made, including acts of terror.