

February 27, 2013

News Release

For Immediate Release

Fire Department Awarded \$206,000 Grant

The Springfield Fire Department has been awarded an Assistance to Firefighters Grant through the Federal Emergency Management Agency for \$206,300. The grant is to further develop the department's fitness program, as well as providing training to support officer development and certification. This grant is a competitive grant where peers from across the country rate and select those grants that meet the national priorities and will have the greatest impact on local communities. The grant requires a 20 percent local match, which will come from the Fire Department's normal operating budget.

The grant will allow the department to host a peer fitness trainer course and purchase basic workout equipment for each station.

"Over the past several years, the Fire Department has focused on firefighter health and wellness," said Assistant Chief of Training and Safety Andy Woody. "We recognize that investing in the health and wellness of our personnel leads to increased performance and cost savings in addition to being the morally right thing to do. This grant allows us to take a huge step forward by ensuring the department has an adequate number of personnel that are properly trained in developing workout programs that are specifically designed for firefighters, by firefighters."

Over the years, the department has developed a Basic Firefighter Academy and an Advanced Firefighter Academy; however, it has been unable to develop the higher level academies. The grant will also allow the Department to provide three new academies: Basic Fire Officer, Advanced Fire Officer, and Fire Prevention. Each academy is between two and three weeks in length and is designed to develop the critical skills for the positions.

"We are always looking for ways to raise the bar for the services we provide," said Assistant Chief of Operations David Pennington. "Highly trained and capable personnel are the key to fulfilling our mission. This grant will allow us an opportunity to accomplish a goal that would have not otherwise been possible."

For more information, contact: Chief Andy Woody at 864-1520.