

December 19, 2011

News Release

For Immediate Release

Grant Awarded to Fire Department for Extrication Equipment

The Springfield Fire Department has been awarded a federal Assistance to Firefighters Grant for \$564,812. This grant is to be used to purchase hydraulic extrication equipment and place life safety sprinklers in the fire stations that do not have them. This program is a competitive grant process through the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and the Federal Emergency Management Agency, which requires a 20% local match.

Specifically, this grant will allow the Department to replace the extrication equipment it uses to rescue people that are trapped in motor vehicle accidents. Much of the current equipment is old, some as old as 20 years, so it is not designed and capable of cutting the newer metals, such as titanium, used in the construction of modern vehicles. The new tools will give the Department greater capabilities when responding to accidents involving these vehicles.

The grant will also allow the Department to place fire sprinklers in the fire stations that currently do not have them. A fire station typically has a service life of 40 to 50 years. All of the fire stations built since 1996 have fire sprinklers, with the exception of fire station 6, which was a renovation of an existing building so it was not required by the code. This grant will allow those stations to be brought up to the modern fire code and reduce the risk to firefighters and the community's assets. The Fire Department recognizes that working smoke alarms and a fire sprinkler system can virtually eliminate residential fire deaths. The Department encourages all homes to be protected by these two life safety devices and believes it is essential to lead by example.

According to Fire Chief David Hall, "This grant allows us to better serve and protect our citizens, our firefighters, and city property. I am appreciative of the members of our local Congressional delegation that supported funding this important program. These measures would not have been possible without this grant."

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