

October 08, 2012

News Release

For Immediate Release

\$1.2 Million Grant Funds Eight New Firefighters

Event: News Conference about SAFER Grant

Time: 1:30 pm

Date: Monday, October 8, 2012

Place: Springfield Regional Police and Fire Training Center, 2620 W. Battlefield Rd.

Eight new firefighters are joining the ranks of the Springfield Fire Department, thanks to funding made possible through a federal grant. This could increase emergency response time and improve firefighter safety, says Springfield Fire Chief David Hall.

U.S. Senator Claire McCaskill, U.S. Representative Billy Long, and State Representative Lincoln Hough will be on hand Oct. 8 at the Springfield Fire Department's recruit academy to congratulate the new recruits and explain the benefits of the Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grant to the local community. The event will be held at 1:30 p.m. at the Springfield Regional Police and Fire Training Center, 2620 W. Battlefield.

The grant program is administered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and provides short-term funding to fire departments who can demonstrate how an investment by the federal government will provide long-term benefits for fire and life safety in their community.

"The Assistance to Firefighter Grant Program is extremely competitive," Chief Hall explains. "While many communities apply, only those that demonstrate they meet national priorities and how there is a significant impact within the community, will receive funding. The citizens of Springfield have been very fortunate in having received the grant. I feel the City was able to clearly articulate how these firefighters will make a major impact in the safety of our community, not just during the grant period, but for years into the future."

Members of the Missouri State Council of Firefighters invited the local and national lawmakers to see first-hand, what they call a "successful partnership between the federal and local governments."

"With all of the rhetoric that clogs the airwaves these days, often the good work that goes on in Washington is overlooked," says President Tony Kelley of the Missouri State Council of Firefighters.

The eight firefighters began their recruit academy on Sept. 24. The hiring represents the first increase in the number of Springfield firefighters since 2002 and will allow for additional staffing in the busiest areas of the City, in addition to serving the West side of Springfield, where land has been purchased for a future fire station.

For more information, contact: Cora Scott, City of Springfield Director of Public Information & Civic Engagement, 864-1009, 380-3352 or cscott@springfieldmo.gov.