



PRESS RELEASE

September 20, 2016

DeForest Area Fire & EMS Receives Award from Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program

On September 2, 2016, DeForest Area Fire & EMS was notified that a grant that had been applied for in 2015 from the Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program had been awarded.

"The primary goal of the Assistance to Firefighters Grants (AFG) is to enhance the safety of the public and firefighters with respect to fire-related hazards by providing direct financial assistance to eligible fire departments, nonaffiliated Emergency Medical Services (EMS) organizations, and State Fire Training Academies (SFTA) for critically needed resources to equip and train emergency personnel to recognized standards, enhance operations efficiencies, foster interoperability, and support community resilience."

The grant application process is a long and difficult one. We would like to extend our thanks to Staci Francis who took on this challenge.

"DFFD hadn't written a federal grant proposal in some time. I started doing all the inquiries, finding out what I needed to do, how I needed to do it," Francis said. "I researched the Assistance to Firefighter Grant inside and out and participated in many of their webinars to familiarize myself with the grant policies and more importantly, the grant priorities."

Her work has paid off with money from the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program. This grant will allow for the purchase of \$245,039 in SCBA (Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus) and turnout equipment saving the municipalities nearly \$250,000.00.

"The hope is to continue exploring grant options to help supplement DFFD's budget." Francis's ultimate reason for putting the time and effort into writing grants is to ensure the department has the most up-to-date, critically needed equipment and protective gear to safely respond to emergencies.

"It's a lot of work and a lot of effort, and it takes a lot of time, but it's a small piece in the grand scheme of things if you think about keeping firefighters and emergency medical technicians safe."

Department Chief Steve LaFeber, Fire Board President Bob Wipperfurth stated that they "feel that having someone skilled in grant writing, and knowledgeable of the detailed application requirements, makes the department more competitive for the awards."