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OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
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NEW JERSEY

Three SJ towns receive $1.7M grant for fire equipment

It's a merry Christmas for three South Jersey municipalities on the receiving end of a federal grant to purchase necessary new equipment for local fire departments.

Camden, Collingswood, and Pennsauken fire departments received funding for nearly $1.7 million worth of self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) units after partnering on a 2014 federal grant application. SCBA units provide oxygen to responders inside toxic environments like burning buildings. Newer models have upgraded electronics, better safety features that warn firefighters when air is low, and allow responders to "marry up" to another air pack if air supply runs low. According to Collingswood Fire Chief Keith Davis, "This is one of the single most valuable pieces of equipment for firefighter safety."

"This is the first time we've partnered with other municipal fire departments for a regional grant with the intention to standardize our equipment with our mutual aid partners. This grant provided the three municipalities the ability to make a capital purchase without placing that burden on the taxpayers, while providing the departments with the most up to date breathing apparatus on the market," said Davis.

The grant is Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) provided by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). In November 2014, Pennsauken and Camden Fire Departments with Collingswood as the lead agency submitted a regional grant. The total grant award, announced in May 2015, between the three towns is $1,692,633. Notably, the partnership between the towns was a key part of the application - the mention of mutual aid greatly helped the three municipalities earn the funding.

"Working together, Camden City, Collingswood and Pennsauken secured $1.7 million in federal funding for important life-saving equipment for their first responders," said Congressman Donald Norcross. "The Assistance to Firefighters grant program helps our towns improve public safety without increasing the tax burdens of local residents. I encourage more of our local fire departments to join together and take a regional approach to fire safety grant applications. This is a remarkable accomplishment and I was proud to support their efforts."

"Camden is proud to partner with in our neighbors in Collingswood and Pennsauken on this regional grant," said Camden Mayor Dana Redd. "Whenever implementing a regional initiative, it's incredibly helpful having strong municipal partners involved. This grant will help ensure our respective communities and our regions first responders are properly equipped and prepared. The federal monies will help our fire departments replace aging equipment that would have been

forced out of service. I commend our Federal partners at FEMA for the award and for their continued commitment to our community."

In all three departments, required upgrades for SCBA were imminent and would have otherwise cost the municipalities directly. Each town is seeing significant savings by having the replacements funded by the grant.

-Camden will receive 64 SCBA units and 120 additional face pieces at a total cost of $565,006.20 (federal share $513,642/local share $51,364.20)
-Collingswood will receive 26 SCBA units at a total cost of $214,002.80 (federal share $194,548/local share $19,454.80)
-Pennsauken will receive 111 SCBA units at a total cost of $913,624 (federal share $830,568/local share $83,056)

"The Pennsauken Fire Department is extremely proud to have participated in this regional grant project that brings savings to our three communities. A local expenditure of $83,000 to obtain $913,000 in federal funding to purchase breathing apparatus and related equipment that enhances firefighter safety and efficiency is remarkable to say the least and I join with Mayor Maley and Mayor Redd in congratulating our fire departments," said Pennsauken Mayor Ricardo Taylor.

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