



*County of Caroline*  
*Department of Fire-Rescue & Emergency Management*

**PRESS RELEASE**

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**Caroline County Department of Fire – Rescue and Emergency Management receives SAFER Recruitment Grant**

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Caroline, Virginia – Caroline County Department of Fire – Rescue and Emergency Management Chief David Layman is pleased to announce that the Department has been awarded a Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grant from the Department of Homeland Security in the amount of \$314,991.00 for the recruitment and retention of volunteer firefighters. The SAFER grant will provide 100% funding for a Volunteer Recruitment and Retention Program.

The SAFER Grants are a program under the Department of Homeland Security that provide financial assistance to help fire departments increase their cadre of frontline firefighters or to rehire firefighters that have been laid off. The goal is to assist local fire departments with staffing and deployment capabilities so they may respond to emergencies whenever they occur, assuring their communities have adequate protection from fire and fire-related hazards. SAFER offers grants to support activities in two categories: (1) Hiring of Firefighters and (2) Recruitment and Retention of Volunteer Firefighters.

This grant award is specifically targeted towards the Department's initiative to implement a new Volunteer Recruitment and Retention Program. The primary focus is the recruitment and retention of volunteer firefighters who are involved with, or trained in, the operations of firefighting and emergency response. The grant is intended to create a net increase in the number of trained, certified, and competent firefighters capable of safely responding to emergencies that are likely to occur within the grantee's geographic response areas. The grant covers the salary and benefits for a Recruitment and Retention Coordinator, purchasing supporting equipment and media outreach for four years. No local taxpayer matching funds are required.

The Volunteer Recruitment and Retention Program includes a three pronged approach, striving to reach out into our community and discover new volunteer interest and talent. This position will be responsible for working with representatives of the Caroline County Public School System to develop a High School Fire Science Program as well as restructure the current EMT Basic class. This position will also recruit new members in the targeted Carmel Church district where a new Fire Station is proposed. The Coordinator will also be responsible for engaging the new audience countywide, in the form of new residents moving into Caroline County. We have the potential for significant residential population growth in the future based on our approved residential construction projects and commercial ventures.

“The award was truly a team effort. The process was extremely competitive. The dedication of our staff contributed to our success” stated Layman. Caroline County is only one of six Virginia localities that have received SAFER grants so far for this grant period.

The Department expects to have the Recruitment and Retention Coordinators position filled by July. For more information, contact the Department of Fire-Rescue & Emergency Management at (804) 633-9831.

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