



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 Grant to Hire Five Firefighters

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: July 12, 2010

Caroline, Virginia – The 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 \$575,100.00. The SAFER grant will provide 100% funding for two-full years for the re-hiring of five previously frozen fire fighter/EMT positions.

The SAFER Grants are a program under the Department of Homeland Security to help fire departments increase the number of trained, frontline firefighters in their communities. The grant covers full salary and benefits for two years. No local taxpayer matching funds are required. Layman approached the County Board of Supervisors for approval to apply for assistance with staffing using the SAFER program last November to help improve emergency responses and provide for greater safety at the scenes of emergencies.

Layman said that the SAFER grant award will allow the Department to better serve the citizens of Caroline during emergencies by increasing staffing levels back to the levels seen before the economic recession. “These positions will allow us to maintain 24/7 coverage at three stations and greatly enhance our daytime staffing capabilities. Collectively these firefighter/EMT positions will assist our Department in meeting the requirements of the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1720 standards, as well as improving our emergency responses with a minimal financial impact on our budget” said Chief Layman.

Deputy Chief Mark Garnett credited Lt. Ed Bonham, Lt. Leigh Doucet, and Emergency Services Commission member Bill Wick for their assistance with the grant. “The award was truly a team effort. The process was extremely competitive. The dedication of our staff contributed to our success” stated Garnett. Caroline County is only one of three Virginia localities that have received SAFER grants so far for this grant period.

The Department expects to have these positions filled by this fall. For more information, contact the Department of Fire-Rescue & Emergency Management at (804) 633-9831.

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