



NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release

Tuesday, Oct. 27, 2015

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Beaufort-Port Royal Fire Department earns federal grant to upgrade two fire stations

Using a federal grant, two fire stations in Beaufort and Port Royal will be fitted with special air systems to capture exhaust from fire trucks running in the bays to improve indoor air quality.

The Federal Assistance to Firefighters Grant is for \$76,364 and the Beaufort-Port Royal Fire Department will contribute \$7,636 toward the project, according to Beaufort-Port Royal Fire Chief Sammy Negrón.

“This is an important grant and an important project because it will directly and immediately improve the air quality inside two of our main fire stations,” Negrón said. “Our team applied for this grant and earned it, bringing outside revenue to help the City of Beaufort and our fire department.”

The grant money will be used to retrofit the Headquarters Fire Station at 135 Ribaut Road and the Port Royal Fire Station at 1750 Paris Avenue with a system that captures the diesel exhaust at the tailpipe of fire trucks while they run in the bays – the enclosed garage for fire vehicles.

“This is an important project for all our firefighters and fire employees, and the grant certainly helps us install it sooner rather than later,” Port Royal Town Manager Van Willis said.

“This project will improve the working conditions for our firefighters and probably improve the lifespan of our vehicles because we can work on them inside the bay more often,” he said.

Generally, the engines aren’t run at length in any closed bay, said Capt. Reece Bertholf, battalion supervisor for Shift 1 at the Beaufort-Port Royal Fire Department. However, each time a fire truck is started up, there are periods where the engines are running before the vehicle moves out of the bay -- and this occurs again at parking.

With the new exhaust capture systems, fire truck engines can be operated, checked and maintained inside the bay year-round, even during bad weather. This will not only be more convenient for the firefighters and mechanics, but will also extend the life of the fire equipment, Prokop said.

“We think this equipment will not only improve the air quality inside the station bays, but letting the team work on the engines in a protected setting will improve our efficiency and also improve our life-cycle replacement for firefighting apparatus,” Prokop said.

“This is a competitive grant, and I’m proud of the in-house work done by our Fire Department to earn the award,” he said. “Budgets are tight everywhere, and this federal money will enable us to make much-needed improvements to two of our busiest fire stations.”

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