



NEWS RELEASE

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Beaufort-Port Royal Fire Department earns federal grant for safety breathing equipment

A federal grant will enable the Beaufort-Port Royal Fire Department to buy 34 much-needed self-contained breathing packs to replace all the front-line units for firefighter safety.

The Beaufort-Port Royal Fire Department received a \$217,724 grant from the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Coupled with \$21,772 from the fire department, 34 of the oldest breathing units will be replaced, Fire Chief Reece Bertholf said.

“When it comes to firefighting, the dangers of smoke, chemicals, and heat to the firefighter are clearly understood,” he said. “This equipment is vital to the personal protective gear used by our firefighters as it protects their respiratory system in a variety of dangerous situations.”

The new units will be compatible with the department’s older equipment but will be updated to the current national firefighting standards and industry norms, Bertholf said.

The Federal Assistance to Firefighters grant will speed up by 50 percent Chief Bertholf’s 10-year protective gear replacement plan. “Now we will be able to focus funds on other areas of our personnel protective clothing program that would have been needed to buy the breathing safety equipment,” he said.

The grant is being incorporated into the FY2017 budget process and will be executed within the next 12 months.

“Our firefighters are excited to work with new equipment,” Bertholf said. “I am grateful for the support of our community and the federal grant program to assist us in providing for the needs of our firefighters.”

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