



## FIRE DEPARTMENTS RECEIVE FEMA EQUIPMENT GRANT

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**Montgomery County, Virginia** – The U.S. Department of Homeland Security’s Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has awarded \$336,000 in the Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) program to replace breathing apparatus at the volunteer fire departments in the towns and rural areas of the County.

The volunteer fire departments – Blacksburg, Christiansburg, Elliston, Riner and Longshop/McCoy – worked cooperatively to submit the grant application. The award will be matched by \$84,000 in local funds for a total of \$420,000 to replace self contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) that is nearing the end of its useful life, said Emergency Services Coordinator Neal Turner.

The funding will be used to replace 40 percent of the existing SCBA units -- more than 100 units -- and purchase the same equipment from one manufacturer. “This is a giant leap forward toward standardizing emergency air equipment in Montgomery County fire operations, which will increase the safety of fire suppression and operations,” Turner said.

There were nearly 360 AFG grants awarded this cycle by FEMA. Other recipients in Virginia include Roanoke Fire/EMS and Fairfax Fire.

The County fire departments’ 167 volunteers responded to nearly 2,200 calls last year.

The primary goal of the Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) is to meet the firefighting and emergency response needs of fire departments and nonaffiliated emergency medical service organizations. Since 2001, AFG has helped firefighters and other first responders to obtain critically needed equipment, protective gear, emergency vehicles, training, and other resources needed to protect the public and emergency personnel from fire and related hazards.

For more information, see [www.montgomerycountyva.gov](http://www.montgomerycountyva.gov).

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