



Press Release

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**DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY ANNOUNCES
ASSISTANCE TO FIREFIGHTERS GRANTS AND THE FIRE PREVENTION AND
SAFETY GRANTS TO AID AMERICA'S FIRE DEPARTMENTS**

(Washington, DC) February 11, 2005 – Secretary Tom Ridge today announced 320 grants to fire departments throughout the United States in the thirty-fourth round of the Fiscal Year 2004 Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program. The grants will ultimately total approximately 8,000 awards worth nearly \$750 million in direct assistance to firefighters throughout the country, demonstrating Homeland Security's commitment to ensuring that America's firefighters have the resources they need to protect their communities.

In addition, the Department today announced 84 grants to fire departments as well as national, state and local organizations in the first round of the Fire Prevention and Safety grants, also part of the Fiscal Year 2004 Assistance to Firefighter Grant program (AFG). The Fire Prevention and Safety Program prioritizes projects focusing on the prevention of fire-related injuries to children. Many of these awards represent innovative solutions for the delivery of fire prevention activities throughout the United States.

“The Department of Homeland Security is proud to support our nation's firefighters by providing funding for the equipment and training they need. Through this program, we will ensure that emergency responders are able to respond to all hazards,” said Acting Secretary Admiral James Loy.

“We recognize the importance of the Fire Act Grants to our nation's fire departments and we will continue to work closely with the fire service community to meet their needs,” added Matt A. Mayer, Acting Executive Director of the Office for Domestic Preparedness (ODP).

The thirty-fourth round of grants provides \$35,603,556 to help local fire departments purchase firefighting equipment, fund firefighter health and safety programs, enhance

emergency medical services programs, and conduct fire education and prevention programs. In addition, the first round of Fire Prevention and Safety grants provides \$5,770,870 to help address fire prevention and safety issues with a focus toward the high-risk target groups of children, seniors, and firefighters.

The Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program is administered by the Department's Office for Domestic Preparedness in cooperation with the Department's United States Fire Administration.

"The Assistance to Firefighters grants represent a major effort by the federal government to ensure the nation's firefighters continue to have the basic capability they require to do their jobs, improve safety and save lives," said David Paulison, Administrator of the Department of Homeland Security's United States Fire Administration.

On March 1, 2003, the Office for Domestic Preparedness became a part of the Department of Homeland Security. The Homeland Security Act of 2002 (Public Law 107-296) designated ODP as the principal federal agency responsible for the preparedness of the United States for acts of terrorism, including coordinating preparedness efforts at the federal level, and working with all state, local, tribal, parish, and private sector emergency response providers on all matters pertaining to combating terrorism, including training, exercises and equipment support. To support this mission, ODP administers a number of programs that provide a wide array of support to our nation's emergency preparedness and response community. For more information on ODP, please visit the Website at www.ojp.usdoj.gov/odp.

The United States Fire Administration (USFA) is a division of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) within the Department of Homeland Security. The mission of the USFA is to reduce life and economic losses due to fire and related emergencies, through leadership, advocacy, coordination, and support. For more information on USFA, please visit the Website at <http://www.usfa.fema.gov>.

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