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ADEQUATE FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES (SAFER) GRANTS

FEMA Accepting Applications Starting November 16

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) will open competition for the Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Grant Program on November 16th. This is a competitive grant program designed to provide cost-share support for local fire fighting, emergency rescue, and emergency medical services. All non-federal fire departments and local governments that fund/operate fire departments are eligible to apply for this funding. The application deadline will be December 18th.

Specifically, SAFER grants help local fire departments increase their staffing and deployment capabilities in order to respond to emergencies whenever they may occur. As a result of the enhanced staffing, response times should be sufficiently reduced with an appropriate number of personnel assembled at the incident scene. Also, the enhanced staffing should provide that all front-line/first-due apparatus of SAFER grantees have a minimum of four trained personnel to meet federal standards. Ultimately, a faster, safer and more efficient incident scene will be established and communities will have more adequate protection from fire and fire-related hazards.

The FY 2009 round of competition has been delayed because of recently adopted changes that are designed to making funding awards more flexible. FEMA specifically will include new guidelines that permit the retention of positions that may have or might be eliminated because of a local fire service agency's budget shortfalls. Previously, awards could not supplant existing funds. That is expected to be changed for the upcoming FY 2009 award cycle. In addition, cost-share requirements are also expected to change, lowering the amount of local cost-share required for the awards. The specific changes will be announced on November 16th.

The Ferguson Group will update this award announcement when the grant program guidance is released.

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