

Town of Bernalillo

Office of the Mayor P r e s s R e l e a s e

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FEMA/Homeland Security Grant Approved for Town of Bernalillo Fire Department

Town of Bernalillo, NM (October 26, 2009) - The FEMA and the US Department of Home Security recently informed Fire and Rescue Chief John Estrada of its approval of the Town application for funding for new equipment to further support the growing emergency response needs of Bernalillo and its adjoining neighbors. The total grant award is \$185,594.00.

The funds will go toward various pieces of critical firefighting equipment as outlined below: The purchase of self contained breathing apparatus (SCBAs backpacks) worn by firefighters and others to provide breathable air in dangerous environments. Equally important is its passive alarm system (PASS) that warns his/her partners if the person wearing the SCBA is injured or



overcome by gas or other factors.

The purchase of a mobile high pressure breathing air compressor system that produces CGA Grade E breathing air suitable for fire service. This mobile system refills empty SCBDs on site and will be made available to mutual aid firefighting agencies serving neighboring communities;



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And finally funds will be applied toward a Public Safety Geographic Information System that ultimately brings together the entire department's communications and information systems. Location-specific fire and rescue and routing information will be retrieved and/or collected for future emergency calls. Important contact, security, power, hydrant, hazmat, and other essential information for building a response strategy improves with every call. Maximum interoperability is achieved by tying into a central geodatabase the Town invested in during Q1 2009. Currently the TOB GIS System is the link to the state-wide E911 street and address information. The 'geodatabase' approach is essential for improving services to rural areas supported by the Bernalillo Fire department; such as the adjoining pueblos and unincorporated areas like Llanito and Bosque.



Mayor Patricia A. Chávez applauds and congratulates the concerted effort of Chief Estrada and FF Michaela Montañó who put together the funding application. It was well received by FEMA and the proposal was funded to the maximum 95% of purchase price. The grant award total is \$185,594.00. "They are both valued members of Bernalillo's fire department" states Mayor Chávez. "FF Montañó is a volunteer member of the department's ground support team and is an Emergency Medical Technician, a Physician's Assistant and a certified Wild Land Firefighter. Serving as a volunteer firefighter for over 15 years, I appointed John Estrada, Fire Chief in 2006. Chief Estrada has been instrumental in developing the Town's present six member full time department; managing our 22 member strong volunteer fire department; and formulating standard operating procedures and service protocol for a blended operation". The Town of Bernalillo founded its full time fire department in 2006; and, is working on lowering its ISO rating for the benefit of community members.

For additional information, please call Chief John Estrada at 771-7135.