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Denver Fire Department, Denver Firefighters Local 858 & Friends of Denver Fire Work Together to Secure \$1.4 Million from FEMA

Denver, CO – The Denver Fire Department has been awarded nearly \$1.4 million from the Department of Homeland Security’s Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to buy 242 state of the art breathing apparatuses for Denver firefighters and 262 pairs of turnout gear, the protective suits firefighters wear into a fire.

This grant was one of the largest awards in the country made during a recent round of FEMA funding. The Denver Fire Department will be one of the first fire departments in the region to have the new breathing apparatus technology. The new equipment will meet all current safety standards and will allow Denver firefighters to be in gear that is compatible with other fire districts in the metro area.

“We would like to thank the Department of Homeland Security and FEMA for funding our grant request; this grant will help keep our citizens and firefighters safe. I want to emphasize that this grant is the direct result of the groundbreaking collaboration between the Denver community through Friends of Denver Fire Department, Local 858, and the Denver Fire Department staff. This shows us all how valuable community partnerships can be,” said Denver Fire Chief Eric Tade.

Denver Mayor Michael Hancock added, “This is a great example of what can happen when the community comes together to solve a problem. Too often in these tough times, the City is not able to replace equipment as rapidly as we would like to ensure the highest level of safety for our firefighters and our community. This partnership has allowed us to increase safety across Denver without costing the taxpayers.”

“FEMA and the Department of Homeland Security really saw the value in Denver’s proposal for state of the art gear to support our citizens and first responders,” said FEMA Regional Director Robin Finegan. “We commend the partnership that exists between local fire departments and the Friends of Denver Fire as an example of everyone working together for our community.”

“This new equipment will allow firefighters a better range of motion, provide additional oxygen so they can stay in a fire longer and reduced equipment weight that often causes injury to our firefighters,” continued Assistant Chief and Denver Firefighters Local 858 member CJ Haberkorn who authored the grant alongside Laura Douglas, executive director of the Friends of Denver Fire Department.

“The Friends of Denver Fire Department is very excited to begin raising the 20% match required for this grant. Today we are launching a community-wide campaign to raise \$350,000 to provide a 20% match to this FEMA grant and assist with other grants Denver Fire is qualified to receive. We hope the people of Denver will go to www.fdfd.org to make a tax deductible contribution toward this effort,” said Brian Fakharzadeh, board president of Friends of Denver Fire.

The Denver Fire Department has been awarded a grant of \$1,399,877, 80% of the total project cost of \$1,749,846, from FEMA. The remaining 20%, or \$349,969, must be raised with matching funds. The grant will fund the purchase of new Self Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) tanks and turnout gear that will provide safer equipment for our firefighters. The Friends of the Denver Fire Department is working closely with the Denver Fire Department and Denver Firefighter Local 858 to raise the \$350,000 match.

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About the new gear:

Total project cost: \$1,749,846

Department of Homeland Security/FEMA grant: \$1,399,877 (80%)

Friends of Denver Fire Department/Community Match: \$349,969 (20%)

242 SCBA: Cost \$5,688 per each, \$1,376,496 total. 45 minutes breathing time with face piece and extra bottle. These NFPA 2007-compliant SCBAs are lighter and have a streamlined back frame with a low profile. This provides the firefighter with a more complete range of motion, decreasing the risk of injury. Quick take-up and quick release oversized fasteners allow for efficient adjustments with gloved hands and minimize wear and tear. The air saver switch maximizes cylinder air usage.

262 complete sets of turnout gear: Cost \$1,425 per each \$375,350 total. Features include: increased design flexibility, a drag rescue device built into the coat, increased garment composite breathability with a total heat loss (THL) value of 305 W/m² and increased conductive and compressing heat requirements for shoulder and knees. All of this equates to greater protection, increased maneuverability, and greater durability, enabling the firefighter to work more efficiently and safely in the field.

About The Friends of the Denver Fire Department (FDFD)

Friends of the Denver Fire Department (FDFD), a 501 (C)(3) nonprofit, was founded in 2007 by Josh Hanfling and a group of other dedicated business and community leaders. At the center of the organization is a commitment to give Denver firefighters a better chance of returning home to their families at the end of the day. The FDFD is dedicated to public safety and to ensuring that each one of us and our loved ones will be more likely to survive a life-threatening fire. FDFD supports the Denver Fire Department through public education, efforts to improve firefighter quality of life, enhance firefighter safety, and direct resources to meet firefighter needs thereby improving public safety in the City and County of Denver.

FDFD Board members include: Board President Brian Fakharzadeh, David Cole, Andrew Elliot, Nick Fogel, Josh Hanfling, Lynea Hansen, Fr. David Kenney, Brent Kline, Paul Lopez, Immediate Past President Sarah Moss, Holly Nichols, Casey Nikoloric, Steve Sander, Mary Santos, & Meg Satrom. Ex Officio Board Members include: Christian Anschutz, Jeffery Campos, Christine Benero, Mike Dino, Steve Farber, Andrew Hudson, Walter Isenberg, David McReynolds, Jake Schroeder, & Walt DeHaven.

About FEMA

FEMA's mission is to support our citizens and first responders to ensure that as a nation we work together to build, sustain, and improve our capability to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate all hazards.

About the Denver Fire Department

The Denver Fire Department is dedicated to: providing quality, timely, and professional emergency services to those who live in, work in, and visit the City and County of Denver. Respecting each other through trust, pride, diversity, integrity, and training. Working together to achieve the highest levels of preparedness, prevention, and community involvement with a dedication to purpose.

About Denver Firefighters Local 858

Denver Fire Fighters Local 858 has been representing Denver's Bravest since 1946. We are proud to stand fast and are dedicated to making sure that our members have the safest working conditions, fair wages & benefits, and provide the best fire service in the state of Colorado.