

City of Newburgh

Press Release

83 Broadway, Newburgh, N.Y. 12550
(845) 569-7354 – (845) 569-7370

October 20, 2005

City of Newburgh Fire Department Receives Homeland Security Grant to Enhance Communications

The City of Newburgh will be even more prepared for emergencies in today's world thanks to a federal grant for more than \$110,000 awarded by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS). The funding is a collaborative effort of DHS Office of State and Local Government Coordination and Preparedness and the U.S. Fire Administration at the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

City of Newburgh Fire Chief James R. Merritt commented, "These funds will be used to purchase equipment to enhance radio communications between the City's emergency responders (fire, police, ambulance), as well as county, state, and federal agencies should the need arise. Recent events including the Sept 11 attacks and major natural disasters such as Hurricane Katrina have made it clear that direct communication between first responders is absolutely essential to public safety."

The grant will also be used to purchase new radio equipment for the fire dispatch area, in the Public Safety Building, including the dispatch console and backup console, and to provide a second dispatch area at the West End (Engine #3) firehouse to keep communications intact in the event of an emergency at the Public Safety Building. Twenty new portable radio repeaters will also be purchased.

Deputy Fire Chief Glenn Burres and Shingebiss Associates wrote the successful FY 2005 Assistance to Firefighters Grant application.

"This federal grant will pay for new communications equipment and dispatch area upgrades that will allow our emergency responders to serve the community even more effectively," U.S. Congressman Maurice Hinchey commented. "Ensuring that our firefighters have the best, state-of-the-art equipment possible is critical to protecting both the public and our hardworking firefighters, who regularly risk their lives to protect Newburgh and keep residents safe."

Mayor Nicholas Valentine added, "We would like to thank the Department of Homeland Security for this grant. Any time we receive funding for our departments, it is less of a burden on our taxpayers. We would also like to offer a special thanks to Congressman Hinchey, who has always been a good friend of the City of Newburgh."