Vehicle Collision Technical Rescue Tools – Regional Grant Funding Approved

Five local fire agencies will soon receive advanced rescue extrication equipment that could help save the lives of those involved in vehicle collisions.

The Santa Maria Fire Department recently received notification of $200,000 in regional grant funding from the California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) through the National Traffic Safety Administration.

“With this assistance from the Office of Traffic Safety, firefighters within Santa Barbara County will be better and more properly equipped to quickly respond and remove trapped patients,” Santa Maria Fire Chief Dan Orr said. “This should greatly improve a person’s chances of surviving one of these horrific accidents.”

These time-sensitive rescue situations require highly technical skills and tools (commonly referred to as the “Jaws of Life”) to make the critical difference in saving lives.

A survey of local area fire agencies highlighted the lack of adequate extrication equipment for first responders to safely extricate victims trapped in vehicles. Modern extrication equipment provides improved spreading, cutting and stabilization forces necessary to deal with newer vehicles.

The Santa Maria Fire Department will serve as the lead agency for distribution of equipment purchased with the grant. Recipients include the Santa Maria Fire Department, Santa Barbara City Fire Department, Lompoc Fire Department, Guadalupe Fire Department and the Santa Barbara County Fire Department. The newly authorized equipment will be purchased, distributed and placed in service pending final direction from the OTS Grant Coordinator.

Questions may be directed to Battalion Chief Alan Widling, 925-0951 ext. 255.

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