



Nevada County Consolidated Fire District

11329 McCourtney Road, Grass Valley, CA 95949

(530) 273-3158 FAX (530) 273-1780

nccfire@nccfire.com • www.nccfire.com

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Contact: Jerry Funk, Deputy Fire Chief

Traffic Safety Grant Will Save Lives in Nevada County

New Tools Will Help Crash Victims

Three Western Nevada County fire agencies will be awarded a \$70,000 traffic safety grant for the purchase of hydraulic vehicle extrication equipment and training with funding from the California Office of Traffic Safety through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. The grant funded equipment, enables the Nevada County Consolidated, Peardale Chicago Park, and the Grass Valley Fire Departments to provide state of the art vehicle extrication equipment. This equipment aids in the rapid care and extrication of victims from a severely damaged vehicle. In 2016, the participating agencies responded to 423 crashes to aid victims injured in which 17 of those required the use of hydraulic extrication equipment.

“This regional grant will assist the Nevada County Consolidated, Peardale Chicago Park and Grass Valley Fire Departments in obtaining much needed safety equipment for critically injured crash victims trapped in vehicles on our roadways,” said Deputy Chief Jerry Funk. “This equipment has the capability and reliability necessary to perform the most critical tasks. Advances in technology will reduce times needed for extrication, ultimately resulting in improved patient care.”

Delays in extrication can negatively impact the patient’s critical “golden hour” of trauma survivability. The “golden hour” for Emergency Medical Services is the core principle of rapid intervention in trauma cases: 1) get to the patient quickly, 2) treat what can be treated on scene, and 3) quickly get the patient to the right hospital. Anything that can be done to compress each of these time periods aids in patient survival/recovery.

The grant will assist in efforts to reduce the number of persons killed in traffic collisions. Traffic deaths from all causes increased nearly 17 percent from 2010 to 2015 in California. State and federal officials anticipate that final figures will show another rise for 2016. Safer roads and cars, stepped up enforcement and awareness, along with faster and more effective extrication equipment for emergency responders will help in sending that trend downward.

While alcohol remains the worst offender for DUI crashes, fire agencies in the region support the new effort from OTS that aims to drive awareness that “DUI Doesn’t Just Mean Booze.” Prescription medications and marijuana can also be impairing by themselves, or in combination with alcohol, and can result in a DUI arrest.

Watch for a future press release where the public will be invited to see this new equipment at work. Delivery of the new equipment is anticipated in the next 90 days.