



# *Arlington Fire District*

## *Fire Prevention Bureau*

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**For Emergencies**

***DIAL 911***

*“Safeguarding Our Community”*

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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **Local Fire Departments Receive NYS Grants**

The NYS Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services (DHSES) has announced \$300,000 in local grants to promote the development of regional technical rescue teams in the Poughkeepsie area. 2 grants of \$150,000 each have been awarded to the City of Poughkeepsie FD and the Arlington Fire District. The competitive grant program, administered through the Office of Fire Prevention & Control, supports the efforts of local agencies to develop capabilities in the highly specialized field of technical rescue. In both grants, the City of Poughkeepsie FD, the Arlington Fire District and LaGrange Fire District will work jointly to form teams for Confined Space Rescue and Swiftwater Rescue.

Every year in our communities, the fire service responds to water rescue situations,” said Arlington Captain William Steenbergh. “Last year we responded to 7 incidents, not including our response to assist in Long Island following Superstorm Sandy. By working jointly with Poughkeepsie and LaGrange, we will dramatically expand the number of trained rescuers, increase the availability of equipment and resources, and be able to fill a void for a response team that simply doesn’t exist anywhere else in our region. Because of the highly specialized nature of these operations, it makes much more sense to work cooperatively with our neighboring departments to form regional teams, than to try and do this type of work alone. This regional team approach will allow the 3 departments to offer a much higher level of service to the community, at a significant cost savings to the taxpayers”

“Confined spaces exist throughout the City of Poughkeepsie and surrounding towns,” Said City of Poughkeepsie Mayor John Tkazyik. “Every time a worker goes into a manhole, or into a service tunnel, they are in a confined space. The potential for serious emergencies to occur is much greater in confined spaces than in other work locations. When these emergencies do occur, it takes very specialized equipment, and highly trained responders to safely rescue these people. We are proud to be partnering with Arlington and LaGrange to provide this important rescue service.”

The goal of this grant program is to have sufficient equipment and trained responders on duty 24 hours a day, 7 days a week between the 3 agencies to be able to immediately respond to these emergencies, when they occur. At present, rescue teams would have to be called in from other parts of the state for these situations, resulting in a delay of several hours or more. In many situations that delay could result in serious injury or death to the victims.