



NEWS RELEASE

May 12, 2014

Vehicle Collision Technical Rescue Tools – Media Display and Photo Opportunity

On Thursday, May 15, 2014 at 10:00 a.m., five local fire agencies will receive advanced rescue extrication equipment that could help save the lives of those involved in vehicle collisions. Seeing this powerful equipment peel, pry, and cut through metal on a car is enough to make anyone use more care when driving. Firefighters will demonstrate the hydraulic rescue tool in dramatic fashion on a car, then display and distribute the equipment. The demonstration and distribution will take place at Fire Station No. 1 located at 300 West Cook Street.

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

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

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 the 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. This will be the final step prior to placing these extremely important tools in service.

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

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