



SMALL TOWN, BIG BEACH™

**For Immediate Release:
September 11, 2018**

Contact:

Porsha Roberts
Public Information Team
Gulf Shores Fire and Emergency
Service
251-968-1483 – office
proberts@gulfshoresal.gov

Gulf Shores Fire and Emergency Service receives SAFER grant from U.S. Department of Homeland Security Federal Emergency Management Agency

Gulf Shores, Ala – September 11, 2018 – The City of Gulf Shores Department of Fire and Emergency Service has been awarded a \$640,770 SAFER grant by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security Federal Emergency Management Agency. This award is part of the fiscal year 2018 Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) Program-Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) announcements. After receiving notification of the award, Congressman Bradley Byrne wrote to Fire Chief Hartly Brokenshaw, “I know this money will be of tremendous benefit to you and your department as you continue to provide excellent service to the citizens of Gulf Shores.”

According to Gulf Shores Fire and Emergency Services Deputy Chief Keith Martin, “this SAFER grant allows us to match population growth in parallel to infrastructure needs with limited budget impact. These positions are needed to meet the growth projections in our city and to maintain our I.S.O. Class 1 rating, which brings down our Citizens Insurance costs.”

Along with increased staffing, this award will be utilized for training, with a special emphasis on mental health awareness, responding to emergency calls concerning mental health and proper treatment protocols.

“Within the SAFER grant, we received a micro-grant totaling \$6,000 to implement a program for all firefighters to recognize individuals who have mental illness and how to appropriately intervene with individuals, including strategies for verbal de-escalation of the crisis,” says Deputy Chief Martin. “The Mental Health First Aid program will help our staff with patients and each other. In the past, mental health and well-being of first-responders were not considered essential areas for training.”

The FEMA Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) program provides grant funding to help recipients strengthen their ability to respond to fire and emergency medical calls while improving the overall readiness of the department. The Department of Gulf Shores Fire and Emergency Service is honored to receive this award and will utilize it for continuing training of current firefighters and increase the number of trained and certified firefighters who protect and serve the citizens and businesses of the City of Gulf Shores.

###