

LEE EMS GETS PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT GRANT

FORT MYERS, FL—Lee County Emergency Medical Services (EMS) was recently awarded a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) grant of \$230,560 to purchase new protective equipment for EMTs and paramedics, which was accepted by the Lee County Board of County Commissioners today.

The grant will enable medics responding to more than 10,000 hazardous calls each year to be properly suited to reduce their risk of injury and exposure to blood borne pathogens. In addition, the equipment will allow medics to begin delivering care to patients trapped in hazardous conditions before rescue.

The equipment currently being used does not meet newer standards issued by the National Fire Protection Association for protective clothing for Emergency Medical Operations, Technical Materials Emergencies, Technical Rescue Incidents, Hazardous Materials Emergencies or OSHA's Bloodborne Pathogen standard.

Lee County EMS responds to hazardous incidents including transportation, fire, bomb threats and technical rescues. The FEMA grant represents 80 percent of the purchase and the county provides the remaining 20 percent in the amount of \$57,640.

The grant, titled the 2009 Assistance to Firefighters Grant Award, is designed to help EMS organizations as well as fire departments enhance their emergency operations and protect responders.