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California Water Service Opens 2022 Firefighter Grant Program

Fire Departments in Utility's Service Areas Encouraged to Apply for Life-Saving Project, Equipment Funding

SAN JOSE, Calif., July 20, 2022 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Further demonstrating its ongoing commitment to local fire departments and first responders, California Water Service (Cal Water) today opened its fourth annual Firefighter Grant Program. Professional or volunteer uniformed fire departments serving any portion of Cal Water's service areas are invited to apply for funding to offset costs associated with fire protection efforts, equipment, training, and education.

The inaugural program was launched in 2019 and provided \$60,000 in grants. Since then, the program has almost tripled, with \$175,000 distributed among eight fire departments in 2021. Cal Water awarded grants ranging from \$7,500 to \$38,000 last year for equipment such as new hoses, nozzles, and personal protective equipment to a rapid inflatable rescue raft, battery-powered hydraulic vehicle extrication tools, and a HeloPod™.

"For the past three years, we have seen first-hand the meaningful differences our grants have made in protecting our communities and firefighters," said Martin A. Kropelnicki, Cal Water President and CEO. "We are pleased to reaffirm our commitment to partner in this way with the brave firefighters in our service areas, not only to supply the water they need in emergencies, but also to support the work they do every day to keep our customers and communities safe."

According to past recipients, the grants have been truly valuable and have helped first responders save lives. Of the grant received in 2020 by the Northshore Fire Protection District in Lucerne, Calif., Fire Chief Mike Ciancio said, "A big thank you to Cal Water for accepting the Northshore Fire Protection District as a recipient of its community grant program. Cal Water donated funds to the department so that we could purchase a new set of extrication tools; these tools replaced a set of extrication tools that were over 20 years old and we could no longer get parts for."

For more information about the Firefighter Grant Program or to submit an application, applicants can visit www.calwater.com/firefightergrant or email firefightergrant@calwater.com. The application period for this year's cycle will close at 5 p.m. PT on Friday, Sept. 2. Grant recipients will be notified later in September 2022, when Firefighter Appreciation Month is observed.

The grants are part of California Water Service Group's stockholder-funded philanthropic giving program and are not paid through customers' rates.

California Water Service serves approximately 2 million people through 494,500 customer connections in California. The utility has provided water service in the state since 1926. For more information, visit www.calwater.com.