



News for Immediate Release

Oct. 8, 2019

Auditor General DePasquale Releases Nearly \$60 Million to Help Volunteer Firefighters Protect Pennsylvania Communities

STEELTON – Auditor General Eugene DePasquale today announced he has released nearly \$60 million in aid to support volunteer firefighters across Pennsylvania – a nearly \$5 million increase over last year.

“State aid provided to volunteer firefighters’ relief associations helps dedicated first responders save lives and protect our communities,” DePasquale said during a visit to the Steelton Fire Department in Dauphin County. “The state funding I am announcing today will help provide life-saving equipment, critical training and insurance for tens of thousands of volunteer firefighters all across the state.”

Under DePasquale’s 2019 state aid distribution, 2,518 municipalities received \$59.99 million for distribution to volunteer firefighters’ relief associations (VFRAs). The funding comes from a 2 percent state tax on fire insurance premiums purchased by Pennsylvania residents from out-of-state insurance companies.

“For the first time since I took office, VFRA funding has increased over the previous year,” DePasquale said. “The additional funding is good news to volunteer firefighters who have had to weather some hits in state aid over the past few years.”

In Dauphin County, VFRA funding grew to nearly \$1.4 million, a \$100,000 increase over last year. Steelton will receive \$24,354.27 this year, reflecting an increase of \$1,722.75 over last year.

The state aid helps to reduce burdens on local taxpayers, according to Eugene Vance, fire chief of the Steelton Fire Department and president of the Steelton VFRA.

“Every year it gets harder and harder to keep up. The number of volunteers keeps dropping. Our costs keep going up. Money is tight,” said Vance, who has been a volunteer firefighter for nearly 50 years.

Steelton is an all-volunteer fire company which responded to nearly 500 emergency calls last year. To make ends meet, firefighters held several fundraisers including: three chicken barbecues, Christmas tree and Easter flower sales, sub and soup sales, pie sales and “Fill the Boot” donation drives.

DePasquale repeated his call for the General Assembly to consider giving VFRAs greater flexibility to use the state aid they receive in ways that meet specific local needs. Current state law tightly restricts how the money may be spent.

“I want to make sure that the law governing the use of state aid is keeping up with changes in how fire services are provided,” he said.

Act 118 of 2010 governs the overall operation of volunteer firefighter relief associations, which are legally separate from the fire departments they support. State aid provided under the law is intended to solely benefit volunteer firefighters. The list of eligible expenses is found online [here](#).

In addition to distributing the funding to VFRAs, the Department of the Auditor General also audits those organizations to ensure state aid is spent appropriately. The state aid was distributed to municipalities on Sept. 16 and must be transferred to VFRAs within 60 days of receipt.

Review 2019 VFRA [funding details for all municipalities](#) online at www.PaAuditor.gov.

###

EDITOR'S NOTE: A by-county listing of VFRA state aid for 2019 is provided below.

State Aid for Volunteer Firefighters - 2019			
\$60.0 Million			
County	Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association	County	Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association
Bucks County	\$ 4,662,093.14	Bedford County	\$ 288,527.30
Chester County	\$ 3,954,647.14	Blair County	\$ 445,319.50
Delaware County	\$ 3,181,452.11	Cambria County	\$ 564,821.09
Montgomery County	\$ 6,258,891.76	Cameron County	\$ 23,669.98
Philadelphia County	\$ -	Centre County	\$ 920,488.28
Greater Philadelphia	\$ 18,057,084.15	Clearfield County	\$ 386,364.05
Lehigh County	\$ 1,524,062.79	Clinton County	\$ 209,357.90
Northampton County	\$ 1,431,805.19	Elk County	\$ 153,688.69
Lehigh Valley	\$ 2,955,867.98	Fulton County	\$ 90,291.27
Bradford County	\$ 349,284.98	Huntingdon County	\$ 248,288.62
Carbon County	\$ 353,983.12	Indiana County	\$ 420,887.54
Columbia County	\$ 367,973.75	Jefferson County	\$ 211,140.86
Lackawanna County	\$ 684,249.77	Potter County	\$ 87,963.63
Luzerne County	\$ 1,327,880.02	Somerset County	\$ 416,620.43
Lycoming County	\$ 505,691.33	Central	\$ 4,467,429.14
Monroe County	\$ 999,020.75	Clarion County	\$ 182,012.72
Montour County	\$ 114,194.36	Crawford County	\$ 335,377.14
Pike County	\$ 410,806.74	Erie County	\$ 962,858.21
Sullivan County	\$ 61,004.26	Forest County	\$ 39,003.64
Susquehanna County	\$ 260,762.31	McKean County	\$ 148,718.37
Tioga County	\$ 236,063.41	Mercer County	\$ 472,901.80
Wayne County	\$ 408,296.58	Venango County	\$ 191,625.72
Wyoming County	\$ 172,686.65	Warren County	\$ 150,160.82
Northeast	\$ 6,251,898.03	Northwest	\$ 2,482,658.42
Adams County	\$ 619,205.67	Allegheny County	\$ 4,909,624.87
Berks County	\$ 1,864,905.23	Armstrong County	\$ 323,592.73
Cumberland County	\$ 1,607,978.80	Beaver County	\$ 795,708.41
Dauphin County	\$ 1,396,662.51	Butler County	\$ 1,119,975.93
Franklin County	\$ 797,113.82	Fayette County	\$ 645,592.51
Juniata County	\$ 137,470.09	Greene County	\$ 215,586.94
Lancaster County	\$ 3,000,179.14	Lawrence County	\$ 334,659.58
Lebanon County	\$ 765,374.72	Washington County	\$ 1,048,949.54
Mifflin County	\$ 229,294.94	Westmoreland County	\$ 1,948,927.52
Northumberland County	\$ 429,298.52	Greater Pittsburgh	\$ 11,342,618.03
Perry County	\$ 268,276.58	Total	\$ 59,996,635.10
Schuylkill County	\$ 710,184.40		
Snyder County	\$ 217,832.75		
Union County	\$ 250,240.94		
York County	\$ 2,145,061.24		
Susquehanna Valley	\$ 14,439,079.35		

Note:
 A breakdown of aid by municipality is available online at: <https://www.paauditor.gov/vfra-allocations>