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## **News**

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Contact: Joe Delcambre  
Tel.: (202) 366-4831

### **New Federal Grant to Help Train Minnesota First Responders to Deal with Hazardous Materials Incidents**

Police and firefighters in Minnesota will be better prepared to deal with hazardous materials incidents thanks to a new federal grant of over \$262,000, Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administrator Thomas Barrett announced today.

Barrett made the announcement during a visit to Isanti, MN, where he witnessed a demonstration of equipment used by firefighters in response to a hazardous materials event.

“These funds will help first responders before disaster strikes so they can better protect their communities,” said Barrett.

The grant to Minnesota was awarded under the Hazardous Materials Emergency Preparedness (HMEP) Grant Program administered by the U.S. Department of Transportation’s Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA).

Over the past five years, Isanti County and the Isanti Fire Department have received over \$11,000 in PHMSA first-responder grant funding. The grants have helped local officials develop a hazardous materials chapter for the Isanti County Emergency Operations Plan, support a full-scale exercise of the plan, and provide hazardous materials awareness, decontamination and operations training to over 60 first responders. All 30 Isanti volunteer fire fighters are qualified to the hazardous materials operator level, Barrett noted.

Nationwide, the grant program helps the nation’s approximately 4,000 local emergency planning committees prepare and carry out hazardous materials emergency response plans and conduct commodity flow studies that identify transportation hazards. Since 1993, approximately 1.9 million responders and others have received training assistance nationwide as a result of the grant program.

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