

# Federal grants help Round Lake fire officials funnel truck exhaust out of stations

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U.S. Rep. [Brad Schneider](#) visited a fire house in the [Round Lake](#) area this week to get a firsthand look at the importance of federal grants that were used to purchase an exhaust system and new air tanks for firefighters over the past two years.

“Schneider sent letters of recommendation for us, so we wanted to show him how well it has worked out and how important it is to us,” Greater Round Lake Fire Protection District Chief Greg Formica said.

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“We’re lucky to get these grants,” Formica added, referring to the two grants totaling over \$600,000 the department received through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for new air packs and an exhaust system inside the firehouse to remove toxic fumes from the truck’s exhaust.

Schneider said it was an easy decision to write the letter of recommendation for the fire district.

“I am always happy to support our first responders. I appreciated seeing firsthand the impact these federal grants have protecting the safety and lives of our firefighters and the people in the community,” he said.

Formica said that the fire district does not have the resources to come up with that kind of money when considering other expenses like pensions, salaries and maintenance.

“These have a real impact on our ability to serve the community,” he said, noting that the truck exhaust, especially diesel, can be very harmful in the long run. He said the new air tanks are state-of-art, including one that is equipped with thermal imaging.

“It’s built right in. It’s really nice,” he said of the visual aid. “It will make a big difference in our ability to get people out of a building instead of waiting for the hand-held (camera).”

Schneider, a Democrat from Deerfield, is hosting a grant workshop May 14 with U.S. Rep. [Jan Schakowsky](#), D-Evanston, and Sen. Tammy Duckworth.

He added the morning session will focus on grants available to local governments, primarily villages and cities, through a panel of grant professionals who will outline what kind of projects would qualify for grant funding.

Panelists will include representatives from FEMA, the [Chicago Metropolitan Agency for](#)

Planning (CMAP), U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Department of Transportation, Illinois Treasurer's Office, Lake County Stormwater Management Commission and more.

The afternoon session will focus on grants available to non-profits and individuals, with a panel of professionals from FEMA, the nonprofit organization Forefront, the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) and the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA).

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