STATE AFFAIRS
WISPOLITICS
Wisconsin's Premier Political News Service

Dept. of Safety and Professional Services: Distributes nearly $25 million to fire departments through 2% Dues program

Posted on Tuesday, Aug 16, 2022

>> WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. Get the app or access via desktop.

Departments use the funds for equipment, fire prevention outreach and education, and fire fighter training, among other things.

Madison, Wis. – The Department of Safety and Professional Services distributed $24,846,704 to Wisconsin fire departments as part of the 2% Dues program. This is a major source of funding for state fire departments, which use the funding to replace equipment, operate fire prevention programming, train crews, and more. A comprehensive list of distributions to departments is available HERE.

The program requires insurers to pay 2% of premiums collected for insurance against loss from fires. The Office of the Commissioner of Insurance collects the dues, and DSPS distributes the dues according to a prescribed formula that considers the property valuation of municipalities as well as total amount collected from insurers. The formula for determining individual awards is available HERE.

“Communities depend on fire departments for far more than extinguishing fires,” said DSPS Secretary-designee Dan Hereth. “They operate fire prevention programming and provide invaluable education about fire and other safety risks. The provide invaluable disaster response support. Their community outreach also contributes to local social safety nets that help older adults remain in their homes safely as they age. We all benefit in myriad ways from properly funded fire departments.”

Fire departments rely on the funding for critical operations and supplies. Town of Lawrence Fire Chief Kurt Minten says the program funding covers everything from hoses, ladders, and trucks to helmets, boots, and other gear. “If it wasn’t for the 2% Fire Dues the Town of Lawrence receives, we would never be able to purchase or replace the personal protective equipment for our members,” Minten said.

The fire service is a key stakeholder group for DSPS. In addition to administering the 2% dues program, the department regulates fire fighter health and safety and manages the state fire prevention program. The department also launched a youth fire fighter training grant program to help address recruitment and retention challenges in the fire service.

“I am proud of everything we do to support the fire service,” Hereth said, “and I will continue to advocate for all the departments across the state that share our commitment to safe communities.”

About DSPS: The Department of Safety and Professional Services issues more than 240 unique licenses, administers dozens of boards and councils that regulate professions, enforces state building codes, runs the state fire prevention program, and maintains the award-winning Wisconsin Enhanced Prescription Drug Monitoring Program, which is a key tool in the multi-faceted public health campaign to stem excessive opioid prescribing. A fee-based agency, the Department of Safety and Professional Services is self-sustaining and receives no general fund tax dollars for its day-to-day operations. With five offices and 250 employees throughout Wisconsin, DSPS collaborates with constituents and stakeholders across a wide range of industries to promote safety and advance the economy.