

Talking fire truck among new items for fire dept.

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Staff Writer

Halton Hills Fire Department has a new recruit—Freddie the Fire Truck.

Freddie will be used as an educational tool at schools and community events, said Fire Safety Specialist Dave Ford. Freddie is the size of a large kiddie car, and can actually talk—albeit through the remote control assistance of the fire safety specialists.

Funding will come from a \$155,000 Ontario Fire Service Grant received from the Ministry of Ontario Fire Service Grant last year.

The department will also share its purchase of a Fire Safety House with the Milton Fire Department.

Previous purchases with the money included fitness equipment for each station (\$30,000), green lights for vehicles (\$5,000) and trench rescue equipment (\$14,000).

Approximately \$75,000 still remains in the grant account and the department, recently received approval to buy a number of additional items for \$62,300:

- \$5,000 for an Accountability System—a tool used to track the location and assignment of staff on an emergency incident such as a house fire, so that they can be quickly located if they are injured or the structure collapses.

- \$7,900 for SCBA facepiece voice amplifiers, which improves communications when firefighters are wearing apparatus.

- \$5,100 for two air hammer rescue kits, which cut or remove metal during rescues

- \$3,400 for two farm extrication tool kits designed specifically to aid in the extrication operations involving farm machinery.

- \$15,000 for green lights and signage. Each part-time firefighter will be issued a green strobe light to be used when responding to the station. Signs will be placed along primary routes asking the public to allow firefighters in their private vehicles with green lights

to pass so they can get to the station faster as they respond to an alarm.

- \$2,400 for a Sparky the fire safety dog suit to be worn by a staff person who is presenting fire prevention education to young children.

- \$10,000 for SCBA facepiece-fit testing equipment that will measure air leakage into a facepiece and properly size the facepiece to the firefighter's face.

- \$10,000 for an all-terrain vehicle (ATV) and trailer to transport equipment in and out of remote areas for grass fires. It will also be used as a rescue vehicle in remote areas, in crowds or in any location where a truck cannot readily access.

- \$3,500 for a public education display panel.

(Cynthia Gamble can be reached at atcgamble@independentfreepress.com)

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