

## **SOUTHEAST ALASKA COMMUNITY RECEIVES EMERGENCY EQUIPMENT THROUGH RURAL DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY FACILITIES PROGRAM**

**Outline Of Need:** A rural volunteer fire department in Southeast Alaska needed emergency equipment and gear.

**How Rural Development Helped:** Through the “Code Blue” project which is funded through Rural Development Community Facilities and contributions from other entities including the State, the North Tongass Volunteer Fire Department (NTVFD) purchased an ambulance and specialized rescue gear.

**The Results:** With the USDA Rural Development Code Blue program, NTVFD is a viable advanced life support EMS response agency for the citizens of the North Tongass Fire and EMS Service Area. The North Tongass Volunteer Fire Department started operations on February 1, 2004 . At the time, fire protection was being provided by another entity. Ambulance service was being provided by the City of Ketchikan Fire Department for a fee.

In March of 2003, the resident of the North Tongass voted to form a service area for the purpose of providing fire and EMS emergency response. A pumper/tanker was purchased and an ambulance was sought through a legislative appropriation. NTVFD has been moving forward ever since.



Ambulance purchased with USDA Rural Development Funds Through Project "Code Blue"

NTVFD is now located in two well placed fire stations, each with an engine, tanker and an ambulance. The second ambulance (seen in left picture) was purchased through a USDA Rural Development Community Facilities Code Blue Grant and enabled NTVFD to place a unit on each end of the service area. In addition, the second ambulance meant that if an ambulance went out of service, a backup was available to keep EMS going. The Code Blue ambulance also serves as a backup to South Tongass VFD's single ambulance if it should go out of service, keeping their EMS response viable.

The ambulance is not the only piece of life saving equipment that NTVFD has been fortunate enough to receive from the Code Blue program. We have also received red jump kits, complete with oxygen to assign to personnel to carry in their private vehicles to enable someone to get on scene in the most expedient manner possible. Most of the time, one of the personnel with a jump kit (seen in lower middle of this picture) arrives before the ambulance does and begins assessment and treatment. With the USDA Rural Development Code Blue program, NTVFD is a viable advanced life support EMS response agency for the citizens of the North Tongass Fire and EMS Service Area. Code Blue saves lives!



---Written by Dave Hull, Chief of the North Tongass  
Volunteer Fire Department  
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Emergency Equipment Being Demonstrated  
by Volunteer Fire Department  
Staff