

# **\$2.3M GRANT AWARDED TO BRYAN COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES BENEFITS WHOLE COUNTY**

*By Bryan County Commission Chairman Carter Infinger*

Bryan County Emergency Services recently was awarded \$2.3 million from FEMA's safer grant program. The funds will go toward hiring more staffers for the department and should cover the cost of 12 new full-time Bryan County Emergency Services Employees.

This win benefits the entire county, which continues to grow at a rapid pace, thus necessitating the addition of more personnel to keep all residents safe. On average, Bryan County Emergency Services responds to about 5,000 calls a year. In the past five or six years alone, we have gone from having four ambulances to seven, and we've increased the number of units serving the City of Richmond Hill from two to three.

We applied for this grant, which is very competitive, and are happy to announce we got one of the largest shares of the funding that was available. We had hoped to be able to hire 12 more Bryan County Emergency Services Employees, and that's exactly what we'll now be able to do. BCES is currently in the hiring process for those positions now. Anyone interested in becoming a firefighter in Bryan County is encouraged to apply.

We always need good, qualified folks to fill these firefighter positions, and it is safe to say that BCES is constantly recruiting and staying on the lookout for candidates. Our first responders are incredibly important to our community and as we continue to welcome more residents and visitors, the need for more staffers shows no signs of stopping. Not only do first responders respond to fires, but ours are cross-trained as EMTs, so they can provide emergency medical assistance. They also can assist at the scene of traffic accidents and other non-fire-related incidents. BCES does a lot of education and outreach in our community, often visiting schools and putting on great events to encourage fire safety and prevention practices. And it works! Though our population is growing, the number of accidental fires reported is not.

So, congratulations to BCES Chief Freddy Howell and his team. They do us proud every day and we are glad this grant will allow them to add to their staff and continue to keep our residents safe. If you are interested in applying to become a firefighter, please visit <https://rb.gy/tlveyh> to learn more or to submit your application.