

## Governor Christie Announces Peer-to-Peer Assistance Program Available for Sandy-Impacted Firefighters

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### *New Jersey Department of Community Affairs Initiative Matches One Firefighter to Another to Help Rebuild*

**Trenton, NJ** – Governor Chris Christie today encouraged storm-impacted firefighters to take advantage of the Firefighter-to-Firefighter Assistance Program established by the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs' (DCA) Division of Fire Safety in the aftermath of Superstorm Sandy. The program anonymously matches firefighters who need help with other firefighters who have volunteered their services – creating a peer-to-peer network of volunteer assistance to help address a range of needs and ultimately keep firefighters in their own homes and communities.

“During and after Superstorm Sandy, I personally saw local firefighters whose homes were damaged by the storm putting the needs of their communities ahead of their own. While these firefighters selflessly continue to help their communities and neighbors rebuild and recover, a significant number of them still need assistance rebuilding their own homes,” said Governor Christie. “I want to let these firefighters know that we see their need and we are creating an avenue to provide help from within the comfort of their community – the brotherhood of firefighters. If there is a need, their fellow firefighters and the New Jersey Division of Fire Safety stand ready to lend a hand.”

While the initiative does not offer financial support, it does provide a broad range of volunteer assistance including demolition, shoveling, plumbing, electrical work, roofing, waterproofing, and carpentry – one firefighter to another.

The New Jersey Division of Fire Safety will take the request and find a participating firefighter who has the needed skill and/or experience to do the work. Once a match is found, the Division will call the firefighter requesting assistance to facilitate the initial contact, and then allow the firefighters to work out the necessary arrangements.

“While the program's predominant goal is assisting firefighters, it is also aimed at helping the hard-hit communities they serve by keeping these Sandy-impacted firefighters in their homes so they can continue to respond to calls in their respective towns,” said DCA Commissioner Richard E. Constable, III.

To date, the Division of Fire Safety has been able to satisfy requests from firefighters in towns including Little Ferry, Sea Bright, Union Beach, Seaside Park, Brick and Manahawkin.

Firefighters interested in participating in the program can go to the DCA's Division of Fire Safety website at [http://www.nj.gov/dca/divisions/dfs/hurricane\\_sandy.html](http://www.nj.gov/dca/divisions/dfs/hurricane_sandy.html) to fill out a form to either seek assistance or volunteer their time for those in need.

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