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NEWS

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Gov. Blagojevich announces nearly \$18 million in grants awarded to enhance emergency communications

Grants will help local, state public safety agencies enhance emergency communications capabilities through acquisition and deployment of new equipment

SPRINGFIELD – Governor Rod R. Blagojevich today announced 10 grants totaling nearly \$18 million that will help fire, police and other first responders in strategic locations throughout Illinois better communicate with other response organizations during emergencies. The grants are part of the \$36.4 million Illinois received in July from the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA), in conjunction with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), to support state interoperable communications projects. The state's funding also included \$16.2 million the federal government allocated for interoperable communications efforts in the Chicago/Cook County urban area.

"Communications is the cornerstone of effective emergency response. Here in Illinois, we've established a solid foundation for emergency communications, and these grants will help us to continue building toward our important goal of implementing a single communications platform statewide," said Gov. Blagojevich.

The Public Safety Interoperable Communications (PSIC) Grants, administered by the Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA), will help public safety agencies purchase and deploy communications equipment, as well as develop and implement plans and procedures in the use of interoperable communications systems. In addition, \$1.1 million in grant funds is being allocated to the state's public safety agencies to enhance communications capabilities at the state level and \$500,000 will be used to buy equipment that will re-establish communications when existing radio networks are damaged or destroyed in an emergency.

The Governor noted that prior to receiving the PSIC grant funds, Illinois already had invested more than \$27 million to equip more than 2,000 police, fire, emergency management and public health agencies with STARCOM21 interoperable radios and other critical communications systems. In addition, more than 300 STARCOM21 radios were distributed this fall to colleges and universities throughout the state to enhance campus emergency communications as part of Gov. Blagojevich's Campus Security Initiative.

Thirty-four state and local applications for PSIC grants were submitted to IEMA during the October and early November application period. The submittals were reviewed by members of the Statewide Interoperable Executive Committee.

To be eligible for PSIC funding, a public safety agency had to be a state or local government entity or authorized nongovernmental organization. PSIC grant rules also required that applications represent a

multi-jurisdictional, regional group of public safety agencies. Each applicant had to document the ability to make a 20 percent statutory match for the project that must come from non-federal sources, and can be met through cash or in-kind sources. Those approved for grants must complete project work by July 31, 2010.

PSIC grant recipients announced today include:

Applicant (Areas Represented) and Amount approved:

Prairie Shield (jurisdictions within McHenry, Winnebago, Ogle, DeKalb, Boone and Stephenson counties) - \$5,100,000

St. Clair County (jurisdictions within St. Clair, Madison, Bond, Clinton and Monroe counties) - \$3,700,000

CIREN – Central Illinois Regional Emergency Network (jurisdictions within Sangamon, Macon and Champaign counties) - \$2,350,000

Salem (jurisdictions within Clay, Effingham, Fayette, Jasper and Marion counties) - \$220,000

RED (Regional Emergency Dispatch) Center (jurisdictions within Lake county) - \$500,000

NICC – Northeast Illinois Communications Consortium (jurisdictions within Lake, DuPage, Kane and Will counties) - \$550,000

DuPage County (jurisdictions within DuPage County) - \$2,350,000

Moline (jurisdictions within Rock Island and Henry counties, IL and Scott County, IA) - \$1,000,000

Peoria (jurisdictions within Peoria, Fulton, Woodford, Tazewell and Knox counties) - \$1,000,000

Lake County (jurisdictions within Lake County) - \$1,000,000