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MERCED COUNTY CONNECTION

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Merced County Fire Department Secures Grant to Purchase Life-Saving Equipment

For the second year in a row, the Merced County Fire Department received a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety for the purchase of new extrication equipment that will be used to rescue crash victims.

Often referred to as the "jaws of life," first responders use these tools to break apart wrecked vehicles when victims are trapped inside.

These new tools help reduce the time it takes to rescue and treat crash victims.

The new extrication equipment is electric instead of hydraulic and is 50 percent lighter, safer, and easier to use.

Last year, Merced County Fire responded to 2,844 crashes—54 of which required extrication.

Delays in extrication can negatively impact the patient's critical "golden hour" of trauma survivability.

The "golden hour" for Emergency Medical Services is the core principle of rapid intervention in trauma cases:



Firefighters inspect some new extrication equipment during a March 2019 training

1. Get to the patient quickly;
2. Treat what can be treated on scene;
3. Get the patient to the hospital quickly.

Reducing the time of these objectives aids in patient survival and recovery.

"Since this newer equipment is lighter, safer and easier to use, it allows us to rescue victims faster, which ultimately increases their chances of survival," said Merced County Fire Battalion Chief David Scheurich. "In many cases, even minutes without treatment can be the difference between life and death, which is why it's important to have reliable equipment that allows first responders to provide care as quickly as possible."

After receiving the new equipment from the previous grant, the Merced County Fire Department held an extrication training to familiarize themselves with the new tools. Scheurich said they'll do the same once they receive the new equipment.

Follow "**Merced County Fire**" on Facebook to stay up-to-date with the latest news from the department.



A firefighter uses a grant-funded electric cutter during a 2019 training

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