



City of Eustis

News Release

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For Immediate Release –

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Eustis Firefighters hone skills to tackle brush fires

Wildland fire training certification valuable during the unseasonably dry weather

EUSTIS - When Jim Avery started a fire in full view of more than 20 firefighters in the Seminole Forest last week, he wasn't arrested or fined. That's because Avery is a State Division of Forestry instructor who trains local firefighters on the proper techniques to battle brush and wildland fires. The class, which features instruction and live fire training, was requested by the Eustis Fire Department and funded through a grant from the Florida Fire Chiefs' Association.



"We were able to certify 12 of our firefighters at no cost to our citizens," shares Fire Captain Rex Winn, who also attended the week-long class. "Our firefighters know how important it is to be properly prepared for brushfire season, which is why so many of them volunteered on their off-days to complete the training."

Sixteen of Eustis' 24 sworn officers are now certified in wildland firefighting. This training, coupled with the recent purchase of a brush truck and a Federal Assistance to Firefighters Grant, improves the City's fire protection to the highest level in its 125-year history.

While 12 of the participants were from the Eustis Fire Department, the remaining 14 were from other local agencies. The widely-attended class reminds Eustis Fire Chief Roy Tremain of the need for interdepartmental training.

"Wildfires don't respect county or city limits," said Tremain. "It's important for us to work together to learn new skills to protect not only the citizens of Eustis, but our surrounding communities and counties."

The Eustis Fire Department answers over 3000 medical, fire and other emergency calls each year, serving a population of more than 18,000 citizens. In addition to emergency response, the department conducts commercial fire inspections, operates child safety seat and smoke detector distribution programs and teaches fire safety classes to thousands of local students every year.

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