WASHINGTON, D.C. - The Department of Homeland Security has awarded three grants totaling more than $500,000 to fire departments in Seaside, Santa Cruz and Hollister.

- Seaside Fire Department will receive $264,000
- Central Fire Protection District of Santa Cruz County will receive $256,000
- Hollister Fire Department will receive $37,238

"Our firefighters are a key component of our first response efforts," said Rep. Farr, who supports the Assistance to Firefighters Grant program. "With California facing hard times fiscally, it's more important than ever to make sure our firefighters get the funds they need to protect our communities."

The Assistance to Firefighters Grant program has provided $2.8 billion to first-responder organizations around the country since the grant program began in 2004. The three Central Coast fire departments are receiving operations and safety grants that can be used for training, equipment, fitness and health modifications to stations and facilities.

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