



Kansas Insurance Department

Sandy Praeger, Commissioner of Insurance

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Insurance Commissioner Sandy Praeger makes Firefighters Relief Fund distribution

Editor's Note: *A breakdown of local association distributions is on the Kansas Insurance Department Web site, www.ksinsurance.org. Go to the "News" link at the top of the home page, then click on "2009" in the news release section to find this release and the distribution breakdown.*

TOPEKA, Kan. — Kansas Insurance Commissioner Sandy Praeger is currently making the annual distribution of money to state and local firefighter relief organizations.

More than \$9.2 million will be distributed among 582 local Firefighters Relief Associations (FRAs) across the state. That is an increase of more than \$300,000 over the 2008 total.

The local association funds are used for purchasing accident and health, disability, and life insurance premiums to assist firefighters and their families. The money is generated by a 2 percent tax paid by insurance companies on fire and lightning insurance premiums written in Kansas for the previous calendar year. It is collected by the Kansas Insurance Department on behalf of the Kansas Firefighter Relief Act.

Also, the Kansas State Firefighters Association will receive \$391,080 for education and research purposes and to replenish the state association's death benefit fund.

Of the state association total, \$291,080 is earmarked for educational purposes and research into fire prevention and extinguishment, and \$100,000 is used to replenish the death benefit fund. No Kansas firefighters died in the line of duty during 2008, but 264 firefighters were injured as a result of a fire, according to the Kansas State Fire Marshal's Office.

"This fund assists firefighters and their families when an accident or death occurs in the line of duty," Commissioner Praeger said. "The department is honored to assist in its distribution."

Nearly \$1.1 million in benefits was paid in 2008 to firefighters for lost wages as a result of firefighting-related injuries or disability, and nearly \$250,000 went to dependents of firefighters.

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This year's distribution has been accomplished using electronic direct deposits into the relief association bank accounts.

"The electronic transaction results in postal savings and other efficiencies," Commissioner Praeger said. "It makes the distribution process less costly and less time consuming for the FRAs and the department."

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The Kansas Insurance Department, established in 1871, assists and educates consumers, regulates and reviews companies and licenses agents selling insurance products in the state. More about the department is online at www.ksinsurance.org.