



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Terrence Murphy

## Senator Murphy's \$50,000 grant gives Valhalla FD the jaws of life

TERRENCE MURPHY | October 23, 2018

| ISSUE: **VALHALLA, FIRE DEPARTMENTS, FIRE SAFETY, WESTCHESTER COUNTY**



Valhalla, NY - Mention the word "jaws" and everyone thinks about the great white shark from the cult classic sea thriller. The word has a far more serious connotation for firefighters, who associate "the jaws of life" with rescuing someone trapped in a car after an accident. Looking to upgrade their ability to respond to accidents, the Valhalla Fire Department contacted Senator Terrence Murphy, who responded by obtaining a \$50,000 grant for new Jaws of Life tools.

"We're here to present a check for \$50,000 to give the firefighters of the Valhalla Fire Department everything they need to show up prepared, to be safe, and help as many people as possible," said Senator Murphy. "Valhalla is a volunteer department, which means these people standing here with me don't have to do this, don't get paid to do this, and are owed a debt of gratitude for protecting our community. They choose to serve the community instead of sitting comfortably on a couch with their families. They choose our safety over their own, and I'll always do whatever I can to help them."

The battery powered, hydraulic, lifesaving machine has a more powerful bite than the world's largest shark. With a 7.87-inch opening, the Jaws of Life cutter can cut through any vehicle with ease. The Department also purchased a spreader.

A portion of the grant will go toward new cameras that will help firefighters see better through smoke and haze. Some of the funds will go towards the purchase of new air bags for older trucks.



Commissioner Anthony Ciancio stated, "On Behalf of the entire Valhalla Fire Department, I want to thank Senator Murphy for the new rescue equipment. The Hurst Jaws of Life tool is actually coming at a great time, since ours is old and ready to be replaced. Additionally, I want to thank Senator Murphy for his past help in our Relief Fund for Florida. He was an integral parting in organizing the travel and delivery through his contacts in Albany and in this area."

The hydraulic Jaws of Life spreader was developed in 1972 by Tim Smith and Mike Brick, who later created a cutter and a hydraulic ram. When an occupant is trapped, the tool is used to pry open the vehicle or cut it open to remove the occupant. Brick coined the phrase "Jaws of Life" after he observed people saying that their new device "snatched people from the jaws of death."