



Storm King Mountain Technologies and Vivometrics Government Services Awarded Grant by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security Office for Domestic Preparedness to Fund Wildland Firefighter Safety Study

Companies Partner to Assess the Physiologic Condition of Firefighters While Working in High-Stress Environments

CAMARILLO, Calif. -- May 2, 2005 -- VivoMetrics Government Services and Storm King Mountain Technologies today announced the award of a grant in the amount of \$748,699 from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Office of State and Local Government Coordination and Preparedness. The grant will be used to conduct a physiologic assessment of 500 wildland firefighters during their annual work capacity fitness "pack" tests.

The VivoMetrics® LifeShirt® System, a comfortable and light weight garment, will be worn by firefighters beneath their protective gear to monitor their cardiopulmonary function. These high resolution physiological data will then be analyzed to further the understanding of what a wildland firefighter experiences during the stresses of fighting a forest fire. Pack tests determine the fitness of wildland firefighters by requiring them to walk 3.5 miles wearing a 45-pound pack in 45 minutes or less. While this test provides a valuable gauge of physical fitness every year, the physical strain can take its toll – last year, three firefighters died during pack tests in the United States.

The objective of VivoMetrics Government Services and Storm King Mountain Technologies' work will be to simultaneously measure respiration, heart rate, blood oxygen saturation, body temperature, posture, and activity experienced by firefighters while they participate in the annual pack test. It is hoped that this data will provide a greater understanding of the physiologic responses that accompany the stress involved in such a test. Most importantly, the data will ultimately assist in producing guidelines for the monitoring of physiologic responses to increase overall safety in future pack tests, training scenarios and deployment in the field.

"In my opinion, there is no better use of fire prevention and safety funds than to help save firefighters' lives," said Matt Mayer, Acting Executive Director, Office of State and Local Government Coordination and Preparedness. "For the last 30 years, we have spent a lot of time and research on how to make firefighting safer, and now we are starting to apply some of that work to wildland firefighters. This is a great way for us to partner with our colleagues at the state and local level and the private sector to try to

bring down the number of deaths that have occurred on the line and help our fire service get stronger and better."

"Today, we have no information about how a wildland firefighter is being affected by the stresses of fighting a forest fire," said Andrew Behar, President of VivoMetrics Government Services. "By wearing a LifeShirt beneath their protective gear we can gather the data needed to develop guidelines to help reduce the threat of injury or fatality that accompany this line of work. We're extremely proud to be a part of this effort to further protect the nation's wildland firefighters who put their lives on the line every day."

"We are deeply honored to be able to provide this unique service to the wildland firefighting community and to gather this vital information during the upcoming fire season," said Jim Roth, President of Storm King Mountain Technologies. "The ability to monitor vital signs will give safety officers and fitness test administrators the tools to improve firefighter safety."

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