



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Jan. 16, 2026

CONTACT: Shannon McCarthy, (907) 269-0448, shannon.mccarthy@alaska.gov

DOT&PF Provides New Extrication Tools for Alaska EMS Agencies

(ANCHORAGE, Alaska) – The Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities (DOT&PF) strengthened rural emergency response capabilities across the state through the delivery of new vehicle extrication tools to 14 Fire and Emergency Medical Service (EMS) agencies, supporting faster and safer response to serious motor vehicle crashes on Alaska's roadways.

This effort is part of DOT&PF's Partners in Safety initiative, a comprehensive approach to improving roadway safety that recognizes the critical role first responders play during the most severe crashes.

The impact of this investment is already being seen in the field. A rural volunteer fire department responded to a nighttime motor vehicle crash involving a tractor trailer in Interior Alaska, where two occupants and their pet were trapped inside their vehicle after it came to rest against trees. With temperatures near -25°F, responders used one of the newly provided extrication tools to clear debris and open a door within minutes, allowing the occupants and their pet to be safely removed and evaluated by medics.

"When serious crashes occur, the first hour of care—often referred to as the 'golden hour'—is critical," said DOT&PF Commissioner Ryan Anderson. "In Alaska, that care is often delivered by volunteer responders working in remote locations and severe weather. This project is about getting the right tools into the hands of responders who are already doing extraordinary work, so they can do their jobs safely and effectively."

In Alaska, many crash responses—particularly along high-speed rural highways—are handled by volunteer Fire and EMS departments operating with limited resources. Through the EMS Extrication Tools Assistance Project, DOT&PF is using flexible federal funding to make a one-time investment in life-saving equipment that supports emergency response infrastructure.

The project emerged from direct conversations with rural and volunteer EMS agencies who asked how the department could help.

Most emergency response agencies received extrication tool packages in late 2025 the remainder expected within the next few weeks.

The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities oversees 237 airports, 9 ferries serving 35 communities, over 5,600 miles of highway and 839 public facilities throughout the state of Alaska. The mission of the department is to **"Keep Alaska Moving."**

#

EMS Extrication Tools Assistance Grant Recipients:

- Yakutat Alaska Fire/EMS
- Wrangell Volunteer Fire Department
- Hollis Volunteer Fire Department
- Chugiak Fire and Rescue Company Inc.
- Cooper Landing Emergency Services
- Delta Junction Volunteer Fire Department
- Nenana Volunteer Fire and EMS Department
- Rural Deltana Volunteer Fire Department
- Gakona Volunteer Fire Department
- Valdez Fire Department
- Tri-Valley Volunteer Fire Department
- Dillingham Fire and Rescue
- Salcha Fire & Rescue
- Cordova Volunteer Fire Department