

IPL Community Fund boosts emergency readiness at St Helens



The **IPL Community Fund**, along with the **Dollar for Dollar Program**, is a key part of our **Group Community Investment Framework**.

The IPL Community Fund is a dedicated budget, allocated once a year by a committee of business leaders to support worthwhile initiatives within our local communities.

This financial year, we have been able to support 20 worthwhile projects through the Community Fund. Applications for the 2014 Community Fund will open in June this year.

All IPL employees are encouraged to apply on behalf of their site or business unit.

Helping the community: St Helens Plant Manager Lorne Clark, second from left, hands over the funding to Columbia River Fire & Rescue representatives Captain Mike Gorscuh, Fire Chief Jay Tappan and firefighter Brandon Carr.

The manufacturing plant at St Helens, near Portland in Oregon, has come to the rescue of local emergency services by arranging funding for new respirator testing equipment.

The support was provided through IPL’s Community Fund, which provided US\$10,000 for Columbia River Fire & Rescue to purchase equipment for testing how well respirators fit emergency crews.

St Helens Plant Manager Lorne Clark handed over the US\$10,000 IPL Community Fund cheque to Columbia River Fire & Rescue in a ceremony last month.

“We wanted to do something that benefited the entire county,” he said.

Brian Burrig, of Columbia River Fire & Rescue, told guests at the ceremony: “We really do appreciate this. It will be a real advantage for us.”

Gregg Bailey, St Helens’ Health and Safety representative, explained to *IPL eNews* how the new equipment works.

“The machine will allow more frequent and more accurate fit-testing of their breathing equipment used during emergencies, while enhancing compliance with regulations and the safety of the responders,” he said.

Gregg said the device would be used by fire first responders, emergency medical service providers and law enforcement officers within Columbia County.

The computer-controlled Portacount Plus tester uses microscopic particles in ambient air to instantly measure any leakages into the respirator while the operator performs moving and breathing exercises.

Until now, emergency crews in Columbia County have used a basic method of testing respirator fit.

“We used to do it by putting the mask on, putting a bag over the person’s head and introducing a smelly substance,” Ron Youngberg, Division Chief of Columbia Fire & Rescue, told the *St Helens Chronicle*, which covered the handover.

“If they could smell it, it didn’t have a good fit. But the Occupational Safety and Health Administration requires more quantitative testing. The new machine has a computer that does all of that.”

Gregg Bailey told *IPL eNews*: “On behalf of the employees in St Helens we thank the IPL Community Fund for allowing us to support our local fire and rescue first responders and make a positive difference in our community.”