



## Board of Chosen Freeholders

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## MEDIA RELEASE

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: December 31, 2020

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## **New Burn Facility For First Responders' Training Approved By Hunterdon Freeholders**

A construction contract to replace the over twenty-five-year-old burn training facility at the Hunterdon County Emergency Services Training Center (ESTC), in Clinton Township, was approved by the Hunterdon Freeholder Board at a special meeting on December 30<sup>th</sup>.

Freeholder Board Director Shaun C. Van Doren stated, "The current burn training facility is near its end of life. Having a safe and technologically up to date burn building for training is vitally important in ensuring the proficiency and professionalism of our county volunteer emergency responders."

The \$3.6 million contract was awarded to Grade Construction, Inc, of Paterson, New Jersey, which offered the lowest of the seven public bids the county received.

Van Doren pointed out, "The next lowest bid was for \$4.159 million and the highest bid was \$4.6 million. So, we believe the competitive bid process has worked in the county's favor."

The contract calls for construction of a four story, 5500 square foot burn facility, with various simulators used by volunteer first responders for necessary training, and related major site improvements, including a water storage tank and pumphouse, a series of fire hydrants, a new 1000 foot roadway and area for parking, concrete pads around the structure, a propane tank facility, and lighting for night training.

The County's Acting Public Safety Director and Office of Emergency Management Coordinator Brayden Fahey noted, "The facility will transform the way Hunterdon County trains our first responders for many years to come. The building is designed to allow first responders to train for a variety of technical rescue incidents by equipping the structure with various simulators, props, and obstacles, affording the most realistic training experience possible."

The new burn building is the first phase of an upgrade for the ESTC complex that will include a new vehicle storage facility for the County's fire apparatus used in training and a classroom and administration facility to support training programs.

Van Doren said, "This project has been on the drawing board since 2013, the capital funding was put in place in 2016. We want to see the entire project completed, however, the phase in approach is in line with the judicious financial approach the Board takes to the expenditure of tax dollars."