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## **Cohoes, NY Fire Department Selects OnSite ERT™ to Increase On-Scene Firefighter Safety**

**Ann Arbor, MI** (April 7, 2010) – It's a problem all too familiar for fire departments: knowing which personnel have arrived on-scene and the location of the responders throughout the incident. If there is an evacuation, how does the commander know that everyone made it out? If a firefighter becomes trapped, there may just be a couple of minutes to find and rescue him. But if he is safe but simply got lost in the confusion, the chief may be sending a rescue team in for a useless but extremely dangerous mission. What's the cost of guessing wrong?

That stressful and dangerous situation will be a thing of the past for the Cohoes, NY Fire Department, where department officials are introducing new tracking technology called OnSite ERT™. The system will replace previous, less reliable techniques to determine crew status and locations during emergencies.

Thanks to an AFG (Assistance to Firefighters Grant), the Cohoes FD will begin utilizing OnSite ERT™ at emergency scenes starting in late Spring of 2010. The technology uses a combination of lightweight ID tags, portable Drop Readers and Incident Command software that provides a clear, real-time view of the emergency scene – all from the screen of a laptop.

OnSite ERT, a portable and rapidly deployable system for tracking and monitoring first responders and equipment, is the brainchild of retired fire commander John Ellis and technology expert Dennis Carmichael. Following several months of research, development and live trials at fire training events, the product is gaining traction among fire departments nationwide, already in use by over 50 departments from Texas to New York and Canada, with more on the horizon.

OnSite ERT has also proven beneficial for use in mutual-aid events, streamlining response and improving post-incident reporting and performance analysis, which helps departments comply with federal rules in place for emergency situations. The system tracks and records all on-scene activity, demonstrating that rules and SOPs were followed, helping limit legal risks in the event of a tragedy.

“For Chief Officers, OnSite ERT removes a tremendous amount of anxiety while improving crew safety,” Ellis said. “Our goal is to eventually see every fire department using this technology. With OnSite ERT, the Chief might be able to send someone home who wouldn't have made it otherwise.”

### **About OnSite ERT**

Based in Ann Arbor, Michigan, OnSite ERT offers a portable and rapidly-deployable system for tracking and locating personnel and equipment on-scene at emergency events. OnSite ERT has recently introduced ERT Central™, an on-line database for automatically sharing information between mutual-aid partners, regional response, and Emergency Operations Centers. OnSite ERT is on the DHS Authorized Equipment List and is approved for grant purchase. For more information, go to [www.OnSiteERT.com](http://www.OnSiteERT.com).

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