

Appleton International Airport Gets \$10.4 Million To Build Fire and Rescue Training Center

<https://www.postcrescent.com/story/news/2018/08/23/appleton-airport-build-fire-and-rescue-training-center/1073837002/>

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GREENVILLE - The Appleton International Airport has been awarded \$10.4 million by the U.S. Department of Transportation to build a regional aircraft fire and rescue training facility, U.S. Sen. Tammy Baldwin announced Thursday.

Baldwin worked to secure federal funding for the project after similar training facilities closed in Michigan and Minnesota, which made it difficult for airport firefighters to find a place to train in the region. The project will involve a partnership with Fox Valley Technical College, the Democrat said in a released statement.

"Appleton International Airport is making a significant investment to expand educational and career opportunities in the Fox Valley and is building upon its strong relationship with Fox Valley Technical College for training," she said.

The training facility will be built near FVTC's Public Safety Training Center near the airport. The project will involve local suppliers of fire safety vehicles, such as Oshkosh Corp. and Pierce Manufacturing.

Airports across the country have to ensure aircraft rescue and firefighting personnel get training every year.

"This funding will be instrumental in creating a state-of-the-art training center for airport firefighters to complete their FAA-required training," said airport director Abe Weber. "Our strong partnership with Fox Valley Technical College enables Appleton International Airport to build this facility at a fraction of the cost and make training services more accessible to airport first responders."

Chris Matheny, vice president and chief academic officer at FVTC, said the funding will address a critical need for airport first responders and "help ensure that airport firefighters are well prepared to respond when they are needed most."

Assembly Majority Leader Jim Steineke (R-Kaukauna) released a statement Thursday afternoon applauding the federal support for the project.

“A year ago, I was proud to vote for a budget that secured the state dollars needed to make this project a reality,” he said. “This was the missing piece that will set in motion an important training facility for the state – right here in Outagamie County.”