

EXPLANATION: Article 25, § 24 is amended to provide an increased uniform threshold amount above which county contracts must be competitively bid. The \$15,000 figure is consistent with the decision of the General Assembly to alter the threshold for certain contracts entered into by the county boards of education. See Chapter 391, Acts of 1993. This section does not apply to charter counties and, to the extent that the \$15,000 figure is higher than an amount in a county's public laws, this section provides a county with supplemental authority. See Article 25, § 9 of the Code. Consistent with the intent to provide a uniform threshold amount, the exemption concerning Calvert County is repealed.

(w) [(1)] To contribute funds to volunteer fire departments in the county.

[(2)] (W-1) (1) The County Commissioners of Dorchester County shall pay [in each of the years 1979, 1980, and 1981] EACH YEAR at least the [sums] SUM of [\$81,500, \$100,000, and] \$118,500[, respectively] to the several volunteer fire companies in the county, so long as they remain active bodies and fire-fighting organizations, for their benefit. The money shall be used by the respective fire companies for the support, maintenance, equipment, and operation of the several fire companies for the purpose of suppressing fires in the county.

[(3)] (2) The payment shall be made on the first day of October [in each of the years] EACH YEAR by the County Commissioners [of Dorchester County], and it shall be distributed to the several fire companies of Dorchester County in at least the following amounts:

	[1979	1980	1981]
Cambridge	[\$ 7,500	\$ 9,000]	\$10,500
Hurlock	[6,500	8,000]	9,500
Secretary	[6,000	7,500]	9,000
Vienna	[6,000	7,500]	9,000
East New Market	[6,000	7,000]	8,000
Eldorado	[5,500	6,500]	7,500
Neck	[5,500	6,500]	7,500
Lloyds	[5,500	6,500]	7,500
Lakes & Straits	[5,500	7,000]	8,500
Church Creek	[5,500	7,000]	8,500
Madison	[5,500	7,000]	8,500
Hoopers Island	[5,500	7,000]	8,500
Linkwood-Salem	[5,500	6,500]	7,500
Taylor's Island	[5,500	7,000]	8,500

(3) THE ELLIOTTS VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANY SHALL RECEIVE AN AMOUNT SET BY THE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS.

(4) Each company shall comply with the bylaws of the Volunteer Fire Companies Association of Dorchester County, and a payment may not be made to a company unless it is complying with these bylaws.