

**Town of Topsfield****Category: Personal Protective Equipment****Description of Project:**

The Town of Topsfield is committed to protect the health and safety of its firefighters. The Topsfield Fire Department has begun a program, which the final goal is to have 100% of the department's personnel issued turnout gear compliant with NFPA 1500 in its entirety. The Town of Topsfield is requesting funds to replace twenty-four (24) complete sets of structural firefighting gear. Our current inventory consists of six new sets of gear and twenty-four sets of mix and match gear that is 5 to 10 years old and not in compliance with OSHA or NFPA standards, thus putting firefighter's safety in jeopardy. If awarded, we seek to replace this gear with NFPA and OSHA suits. We would also be seeking funds to install a Three-Phase Washer-Extractor.

**Detailed budget plan:**

<b>Personal Protective Equipment</b>	<b>Quantity</b>	<b>Unit Cost</b>	<b>Extended Cost</b>
Boots	24	\$120.00	\$2,880.00
Turnout Pants	24	\$600.00	\$14,400.00
Turnout Coats	24	\$400.00	\$9,600.00
Suspenders	24	\$20.00	\$480.00
Hoods	24	\$30.00	\$720.00
Helmets	24	\$200.00	\$4,800.00
Gloves	24	\$45.00	\$1,080.00
Upgrade Electrical System	1	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00
Three-phase, Washer-Extractor	1	\$6,800.00	\$6,800.00
Upgrade Plumbing System	1	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00
<b>Total Project Cost</b>			<b>\$44,260.00</b>

### **Rationale of the program to the community and the fire department:**

The Town of Topsfield is a rural community with Interstate routes 95, 1, and 97. The Topsfield Fire Department responds to all reports of fires, rescues, medical emergencies at the ALS and BLS level, and hazardous materials incidents within its jurisdiction. As an ALS ambulance service, our firefighter/paramedics are performing lifesaving maneuvers, which are invasive and increase the potential for exposure to infectious bodily fluids. Turnout gear that is compliant with current OSHA and NFPA standards would better protect our firefighters from infectious disease. Hazardous materials continuously pass through our community via semi-trailer trucks. Additionally, the Seabrook Nuclear Power Plant is located in close proximity to our community. Properly outfitted turnout gear is vital to protect firefighters when mitigating hazardous materials incidents. Last year the department responded to 1019 requests for assistance at which firefighters wore their assigned gear.

The Town of Topsfield has a very large elderly population with several elderly housing complexes. This is considered an “at-risk” population. The fire department responded to 87 structure fires last year. Of these 27 were in elderly complexes, which required total evacuations and extensive searches. Properly fitted turnout gear is critical at each of these incidents for firefighter and civilian safety.

The Topsfield Fire Department currently does not have a washing machine/extractor to comply with the biannual cleaning and disinfecting of turnout gear or to clean contaminated gear after an incident. To clean gear, personnel must travel a considerable distance. Certainly this is inconvenient, but more importantly it increases the opportunity for the spread of infectious disease during handling.

Topsfield is not the only area department with this dilemma. Several surrounding towns do not have facilities to clean soiled gear. If awarded this grant, we would encourage all of our neighboring communities to take advantage of this resource to prevent spread of disease and to improve the useful life of their turnout gear.

### **Inability to fund project locally:**

The Topsfield Fire Department is funded through the municipal budget of the Town of Topsfield. Funds are raised primarily through property tax assessments. Topsfield is a bedroom community with very little commercial or business zones, which further limits the tax base. The ability to raise money through taxation is limited due to a Massachusetts state-level referendum passed several years ago called “Proposition 2 ½”. This year in particular, The Commonwealth has severely cut local aid and the state deficit is over three billion dollars. Projections are even more drastic for next fiscal year. All municipal departments are vying for a very limited amount of money.

### **Relevant information:**

We believe this replacement and upgrade proposal is consistent with and has a high priority with your program. Our goal is to maintain the highest level of safety for our firefighters. Our community is committed to the cash match responsibilities of this project and maintaining this initiative for the life of the equipment. If selected, this proposal would be implemented and completed within 90 days of the award.

