

2004 FEMA Grant
Eleva Volunteer Fire Dept.

The Eleva Volunteer Fire Department requests a total of \$66,626.00 to purchase various pieces of fire fighting and personal protective equipment for the department members. With these purchases, the EVFD will bring all of its PPE equipment into NFPA Compliance benefiting both the community and the fire fighters.

Eleva is a rural town located in west central Wisconsin. Located at State Hwy 93 and US Hwy 10, it is situated just 15 miles south of Eau Claire. The Village of Eleva has a population of 800 residents. The Eleva Fire district serves the village and the surrounding area, covering 50 square miles, consisting of over 1500 people, and contains two school districts, 40 businesses and one industry. Our volunteer fire department consists of 30 members and provides mutual aid to four neighboring fire districts.

Funds requested from the PPE Category include the purchase of 10 SCBA's with an extra bottle. These are the Scott 2.2 AIRPAK 50, 2002 complete with 2216 psi carbon cylinder #8048490202, with AV 3000 mask and PAK Alert PASS System.

Currently, our department is outfitted with multiple models of SCBA's purchased as far back as 1972. We have four SCBA's on each of our two engines and one in our equipment rig. The cylinders we use with them date back to 1960. Equipment includes SCBA's with belt-mounted regulators. Our firefighters receive SCBA training through Chippewa Valley Technical College. Here we are trained on the new models of SCBA's that have Integrated Automatic Pass Devices; we have both MSA and Scott Brand SCBA's. This makes training firefighters difficult and inconsistent, as we do not use the same equipment they are training us on. With too much variation in these SCBA's, valuable time is spent distinguishing proper usage. Our neighboring fire departments are equipped with the new mask mounted regulator SCBA's. Our current SCBA is not compatible to their equipment, which prevents us from sharing SCBA's when we are in a mutual aid situation.

This requested equipment would bring us into compliance, as mandated by NFPA 1981-2002. We would replace the four SCBA's on each of our two engines, replace, plus add another SCBA to our equipment rig to maintain our ISO rating of "5". To upgrade our outdated equipment to one uniform model would create more efficiency and effectiveness, especially in cases of training and mutual aid. Training on one style of equipment will be much easier to train our fire fighters on and easier for them to remember. It will also allow us to share tanks with neighboring fire departments when in a mutual aid situation.

The department is requesting the purchase of 10 SCBA's @ \$3,608.00 each.

Funds also requested from the PPE Category will be used to purchase equipment to supply five members of the department. Five sets of our current PPE still remain NFPA non-compliant. The purchases would include five sets of turnout gear, which would include 7.5 oz. Nomex IIIA Assault Gear Coats and 7.5 oz. Nomex IIIA Assault Gear bunker pants.

This purchase would replace coats and bunker pants purchased as far back as 1984. We have upgraded pieces of our PPE over the years, but have five sets yet to upgrade. We are requesting the purchase of the PPE so all our members will be equipped with adequate, uniform gear to protect them in active use. The liners in our turnout coats have deteriorated over years of wear and tear. They have holes, giving little protection to the firefighter wearing it in extreme temperatures and worn reflective tape. Some of the outdated PPE still being used are the wader-style boot pants. The protection these pants offer have become weakest where the boots fold when not in use.

The department requests the purchase of five coats @ \$539.00 each and five sets of bunker pants @ \$457.00 each, totaling \$4,980.00 to become 100% NFPA compliant.

The total funding request for the PPE Category is \$41,060.00

Our first request for funds from the Firefighting Equipment Category will be used to purchase a Cascade System for our department. This is a North Shore 5000 psi Breathing Air Compressor system that will support the 10 units of SCBA's also requested in this grant application.

Our main concern is the quality of the air put into our bottles and timely access to a fill station. Because we do not have our own equipment to fill our tanks, we currently rely on a nearby mutual aid department to refill ours. Unfortunately, the closest department that has a system is not OSHA compliant with their fill station. We also have the option to travel up to 15 miles away to fill our bottles with another neighboring department, when it can be arranged. Their current system is approximately 25 years old and is only a 2400 psi. There are times when our equipment is not prepared for a fire call because we simply have not had access to the fill station.

The purchase of a Cascade System will provide important improvements to our department. It will offer health and safety benefits by allowing us to fill our bottles immediately after depletion from an OSHA compliant fill station. This cascade system will also be able to support the increased psi level of the requested SCBA's which the neighboring department's system can not. It will provide improved air quality and place our SCBA's back in service immediately after a fire. As it is, we are waiting for our neighboring department to refill our bottles, which could take up to two days to arrange.

An upgrade to the North Shore 5000 psi Breathing Air Compressor would also include a four bottle cascade system and two bottle containment center. If we are granted our request for new air SCBA's, the addition of this compressor system will greatly improve our ability to be prepared for an emergency call and not have to rely on neighboring fire departments to support our equipment to function to our fullest.

The department is requesting the purchase of a Cascade System @ \$13,466.00.

Our second request for funds from the Firefighting Equipment Category will be used to purchase a Scott Eagle 160 Thermal Imaging Camera with temperature read out for our department.

Because we currently do not own this type of equipment, we have been calling upon the nearest fire department to use their camera, which is 20 miles away. This delay prevents us from securing the structure, locating possible victims and locating the fire source. This is becoming more of a burden on our neighboring department, as we are using their camera for many different purposes.

The addition of a Thermal Imaging Camera would allow us to more effectively manage a fire scene. This camera will assist us in locating possible victims in smoke filled buildings and pinpoint hot spots that might rekindle. Also, because it detects heat, rather than light, it will help us to locate lost victims in our remote, rural areas. We also use the Thermal Imaging Camera to locate the fire source. This has become a vital tool to help us focus on the areas of the fire that will be most effective in bringing the fire under control.

In a matter of minutes, smoke and fire can spread throughout a structure and just moments for victims to be left unconscious by suffocating fumes. Every time our fire fighters enter a burning structure, they are risking their own lives. This equipment will provide health and safety benefits by providing reliable detection of the heat source through thick smoke, doors and walls. A Thermal imaging Camera helps to speed the firefighters search and rescue efforts while improving firefighters' safety when inside the structure.

The department is requesting the purchase of a Thermal Imaging Camera @ \$11,300.00.

Our final request for funds from the Firefighting Equipment Category will be used to purchase a RIT-PAK with a low air pressure hose and pyrotone bag.

Our fire department is not equipped with a RIT-PAK. This is a basic, yet vital piece of equipment for our RIT team to have in order to be effective. Low air supply, lost, trapped, disoriented or downed firefighters. These are all potential circumstances that our department members face every time they enter a fire scene. When things go wrong, our RIT team has to be ready, prepared and equipped to handle any rescue situations. The purchase of a RIT-PAC provides quick and easy connections for replenishing the air supply to a firefighter's SCBA. Equally important, it increases the level of safety and support a RIT Team can provide for their fellow firefighters.

The department is requesting the purchase of a RIT-PAK with a low air pressure hose and pyrotone bag @ \$800.00.

The total funding request from the Firefighting Equipment category is \$25,566.00.

The Eleva Volunteer Fire Department receives approximately \$37,000.00 per year. This comes from a tax levy from the City of Eleva and the three surrounding municipalities that we serve, insurance dues, our department sponsored fundraiser dance and a wild fire grant we receive from the state. Unfortunately, funds remaining after our operational expenses are paid are not a significant amount and is not enough to fund the needed items requested in this application.

Every year, local services such as police and fire protection are challenged with providing more services and support with less assistance from our state and local government. But it is not just the police and fire service that has seen a cut in the state's budget. It is also the school system, social services and many other important public resources. With these financial obstacles, it is even more critical to provide, maintain and expand fire and safety protection.

Fortunately, we have an extremely close community that supports the continued strengthening of the services we offer. In 2003, one of our local banks, United Bank, made a generous monetary donation to our department that we will apply towards our portion of this grant, if awarded. We greatly appreciate this gift, but are not able to acquire all the equipment we need to move our department to the next level of service.

Our application for grant funds is an attempt to bring our volunteer fire department to 100% compliance in the area of PPE and basic firefighting equipment. Even with the donation from our local bank and our fundraising efforts, we are not able to solely fund a project of this magnitude. We are proud of our department and all that we have achieved. But we still have several areas that need to be addressed in order to keep our firefighters and community safe.

