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Leaders in Fire Service PPE Drying Systems

Grant proposal narrative – please use the following outline as a guide to your proposal narrative. Also, include a cover letter with your application that introduces your organization and proposal.

The **City/Town/Boro/Township** of ____ is a full service City/Town with a residential population of _____. The Fire and EMS responses total over ____ annually.

The **City/Town/Boro/Township** of _____ is requesting \$____.____ for the purchase of _____ ambient air and warmer air turnout gear dryers in order to properly care and maintain our turnout gear in accordance with NFPA 1500. NFPA 1500, 7.2.5 states: “The fire department shall adopt and maintain a protective clothing and protective equipment program that addresses the selection, care, maintenance and use of structural fire fighting protective ensembles and training in its use.”

Moreover, NFPA 1500 also speaks to the cleaning and thermal safety of our fire fighting turnouts in clause 7.1.3 “Structural fire fighting protective clothing shall be cleaned at least every 6 months as specified in NFPA 1851.” Also, the same 1500 standard under clause 7.1.6 it says “while on duty, members shall not wear any clothing that is unsafe due to poor thermal stability.”

Wet turnouts are thermally unstable. Improperly dried turnouts are an occupational health and safety issue!

Wet turnouts occur when we clean them; both as needed and routinely. Wet turnouts occur after most fires and some training evolutions. Wet turnouts occur in any incident that we are subjected to rain or inclement weather. Water getting into and staying in our gear can turn to steam in a firefight and steam burns are a major cause of injury in the fire service. Additionally, we cannot afford the financial hardship of providing our firefighters with two sets of fire fighting clothing. We need a way to effectively dry gear while our members are on shift, between incidents and between duty cycles.

As mentioned earlier, failure to properly dry turnouts is an occupational health and safety issue. This safety issue is further described in NFPA 1851 (rev.14), clause A.9.1.2 stating, “Storage of wet or moist ensembles and ensemble elements promote the growth of mildew and bacteria, which can lead to skin irritations, rashes or more serious medical conditions such as cancer. Mildew and bacteria growth can also affect the strength of some materials.”

Mostly, when our firefighting ensemble gets wet it can take days to dry and even then some residual moisture still remains in the insulation of the coat and the pant. This in turn provides an environment that promotes the growth of mildew and bacteria.

NFPA standard 1851 (rev.07) recommends that we:

- * Dry our gear (7.5.8 para. 11)
- * Use forced air at an air temperature of up to 105 degrees F to accomplish this drying task (A.7.6.4)
- * Limit or cease use of mechanical style tumble dryer (A.7.6.4)

Equally important we must (and should) comply with NFPA 1500 requirement 7.1.3 that requires us to clean our turnouts a minimum of every 6 months.

Also, water staying in our gear adds weight. It may not seem like much, but water at 8 pounds per gallon can add several pounds to an already heavy workload. Anything that can reduce the work stress on a firefighter without sacrificing thermal protection will help reduce injuries.

Currently, without financial help the **City/Town/Boro/Township of _____** is economically unable to afford this drying equipment. In turn, this may cause both ongoing financial as well as health and safety concerns. Please let me explain what a dryer specifically designed to dry turnout gear will do for our department.

The ability to properly dry our turnout ensembles will:

1. Increase the usable life of our clothing and thereby over time reduces the cost to the **city/town/township** of supplying its fire department with new turnout clothing.
2. Improve on average the overall thermal stability and help preserve the strength of our clothing thereby resulting in safer fire ground operations and reduced injuries.
3. Anti-Microbial coating will reduce the potential of adverse health effects and material damage caused by carcinogens, bacteria and mildew in wet or damp turnouts.

Most public service departments, including Fire, have been required to substantially reduce their operating and capital budgets. **[Here the fire department needs to state specifics of financial hardships i.e. Dollars lost, positions cut, revenue lost, increased operating cost, etc]** Funding sources for essential firefighter turnout protective equipment now and in the future will be restricted and it's critical that we properly maintain and prolong the life of turnouts. A forced air Turnout Gear Dryer that is designed to specifically comply with the NFPA drying codes is a large part of this maintenance program while concurrently improving the health and safety of our firefighters.

Sincerely,