

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Gardner Receives \$19,000 from Massachusetts Firefighter Safety Equipment Grant

State Funding helps cover the cost of replacement equipment to provide firefighters with the equipment needed to respond to situations in the safest way possible

February 20, 2024 – GARDNER – The City of Gardner is proud to announce that the Gardner Fire Department was recently awarded \$19,000 from the Commonwealth's Firefighter Safety Equipment Grant program.

"This competitive grant program from the State provides much needed funding for critical equipment that allows Firefighters to safely perform their jobs," said **Gardner Fire Chief Greg Lagoy**. "Firefighting equipment is very expensive to purchase and maintain, and can often be damaged in the hazardous environments it is used. The City has limited funds to keep up with purchasing all equipment needed, and this grant award really helps us meet those needs."

The funding awarded to Gardner allows the Fire Department to purchase new equipment that will be put into service immediately upon arrival, replacing older equipment that has been taken out of service due to failures noticed during testing and training exercises. For a large portion of the equipment being replaced, the repairs outpriced the cost value of the existing equipment. The current, older equipment is either unrepairable or beyond its life expectancy, and it has been determined making repairs would far exceed the cost of new equipment.

Four (4) Lifting Vehicle Air Bags will replace the four devices that were taken out of service due to 1 of the current bags failing during a training event in 2023 and the rest being beyond service life.

One (1) Battery-Powered Positive Pressure Ventilation Fan will replace an older gasoline Positive Pressure Ventilation that was taken out of service due to engine problems.

Two (2) Battery-Powered Portable Scene Lights will be replacing a generator-mounted light that was damaged & not repairable due to the model being discontinued, and a 110-volt halogen scene light that was also damaged and not repairable.

Two (2) Cold Water Immersion Suits will be replacing previous cold-water suits that were recently removed from service due to leaks that were noticed during a training exercise. Both of current suits are well over 10 years old, repairs are not practical.

Two (2) Hydrant Gate Valves will replace two taken out of service due to leaks in the valve bodies, making repairs impractical.

Three (3) Pike Poles (1- 8ft., 1- 10ft., 1- 12ft.) will replace like ones with damaged fiberglass handles, the cost of repairs would exceed their value.

The City also received funds for a new apparatus-mounted, radio/intercom wireless headset system for our primary, first-out Engine. According to Chief Lagoy, firefighters have expressed

concern about not being able to hear radio transmissions both in the apparatus and on the fireground. This system will improve communication, and protect firefighters operating in loud environments from hearing loss. The need for this piece of equipment came after representatives of the Gardner Fire Department attended a recent training where the benefits of this communication system was almost immediately recognized.

"We are fortunate that our State partners continue to support the safety of our firefighters," said **City Council President Elizabeth Kazinskas**. "Our first responders need access to the proper equipment and gear that make their jobs safer while working under dangerous conditions. Our firefighters are incredibly important to protecting the public, and these grants are essential to their safety."

The new equipment will be immediately placed in service on front-line Gardner fire apparatus.

"We have made substantial efforts in making sure our firefighters have the equipment they need to keep our residents, and themselves as safe as possible," said **Gardner Mayor Michael Nicholson**. "From the new vehicles that should be arriving soon, upgrades coming to the fire station facility, and this new equipment, we will continue to do everything we can to provide the resources and tools our public safety officials need to do their jobs in the most effective manner."

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