

(1) Project description and budget:

It is the desire of the Hudson Fire Department to obtain a FEMA grant under the Operations and Safety Program which would be used to modify the Hudson Public Safety Building. The Hudson Fire Department is proposing to utilize the grant funds to purchase a vehicle exhaust removal system. The total estimated cost of this project is \$105,000 with \$94,500 being requested from FEMA and \$10,500 to be funded locally. The Hudson Fire Department-City of Hudson has committed to providing the necessary funds for this project.

We believe that our employee's health and well being is our number one priority. By protecting them from the hazards of toxic vapors and diesel particulate from our emergency apparatus we will move in a direction to achieve this goal. The vehicle exhaust removal system that we are requesting meets the definition of a source capture system. The vehicle exhaust system will remove vehicle emissions from start up to exit. This system will seal to the vehicle tailpipe and remove all emissions to the outside of the station. The MagneGrip system will allow the Hudson Fire Department to fulfill AFG requirements of extraction of all toxic vapors and particulate emitted. This would allow our department to comply with codes of standards for vehicles exhaust as required by NIOSH, OSHA, and NFPA. This system would be installed on all ten of the vehicles housed in the Hudson Public Safety Building.

(2) Organization's financial need:

Our fire department serves four different municipalities (City of Hudson, Village of North Hudson, Hudson Township, and Troy Township) within St. Croix County, Wisconsin. Our fire department is located 15 miles from the Twin Cities metropolitan area. St. Croix County has the highest growth rate in western Wisconsin. Consequently, tax dollars are already stretched to support community growth and infrastructure needs, i.e. adding schools (referendum failed in 2003), wastewater plant expansion (4.5 million in 2000), expansion of the water plant (2004-2005) and capital improvements to vehicles, roads, etc due to population growth (2.5 million to be bonded in 2005).

The community has supported our department's needs for large purchases through taxation in the past. With an increase of 10% in runs every year for the past four years our vehicles are running more frequently creating a financial burden for the City to upkeep and maintain these vehicles. Our plan to maintain and provide a high level of service stretches the available tax dollars. The department is currently in the process of finding land to build an additional fire station in order to serve our growing population with the estimated cost of 4 million dollars. In 2004 the department had to replace a 1975 pumper at the cost of \$400,000 due to mechanical reasons which was much earlier than anticipated. We have also purchased with a cost of \$55,000 this year a wild land fire vehicle. Over the past three years we have spent \$37,000 to replace 35 sets of turnout gear. We have upgraded our SCBA bottles to meet NFPA and OSHA requirements. Also in 2004 through our own Fire Department fundraising activities we have managed to purchase a \$15,000 Zodiac rescue boat, and interactive training software. In the previous year the department raised enough funds to purchase a thermal imaging camera as well. In the past several years with our own fundraising and City funding we have made great strides in improving firefighter and public safety. However, we feel that without the help of AFG funds the safety of our fire station will continue to be overlooked and compromised; as many other needs continue to arise that seem to be more urgent.

(3) Benefits of funding from the cost of your project:

Currently The Hudson Public Safety Building which was built in 1976 has no vehicle exhaust removal system. The vehicle exhaust system would be used on a daily basis for emergency calls, non-emergency calls, vehicle startups, routine maintenance checks and during weekly training sessions. Currently the Hudson Fire Department operates with 36 paid on call firefighters, a full-time inspector and a part-time secretary. Within the Public Safety Building are sleeping quarters, supply storage, kitchen, training room and office space. All firefighter turnout gear is stored directly on the apparatus floor and becomes contaminated with diesel particulate every time an apparatus is started. When this happens over time it reduces the longevity of our turn out gear that was recently replaced to meet current NFPA guidelines. Over the years the level of contamination has become so evident that we have hired a company to pressure wash the entire interior of the station and repaint the walls due to the heavy black soot. This was done just several years ago and today you would be hard pressed to notice that it was ever done, due to the heavy soot staining. We feel that by installing a vehicle exhaust capture system we would protect all of these employees as well as many more additional persons that use this space. After all we do not allow cigarette smoking in Public Buildings we can not continue to allow exhaust fumes to pollute our air. The Hudson Public Safety Building is used by many other local groups such as the City of Hudson for city wide training; it is frequently toured by schools, daycare facilities, cub scouts and various community groups. The training room is also used as a classroom for the Technical College, which hosts classes for all surrounding communities. By installing this equipment it will ensure a safer working environment for all persons working in the building, training in the building and the visiting public.

We feel that if this problem is not addressed that it will lead to serious health and financial problems for the City of Hudson, due to workman's compensation claims and medical insurance claims from illnesses as a result of diesel exhaust emissions exposure. These health problems would lead to low department moral and that would lead to overall deterioration of the fire department. As the department would continue to suffer from the low moral, these effects would trickle down into our recruitment process

(4) How requested equipment will help operations and protect life and property:

By installing a vehicle exhaust removal system our day to day operation would improve by allowing us to keep our doors closed during routine maintenance, vehicle checks and drills. In Wisconsin we are faced with subzero conditions for much of the winter season and this system would allow us to complete vehicle training in the apparatus bay. Also the MagneGrip system would help enhance our response to emergencies by; increased training in winter months that would increase our proficiency, and it is an automatic system that would not decrease our response time.

The MagneGrip exhaust capture system would eliminate cross contamination into turn out gear, sleeping quarters, training rooms, office area, supply storage, computers and furniture. Also the need for the continual maintenance required to clean the soot from walls would be eliminated. Overall we estimate that the system would help the Hudson Fire Department reduce workman's compensation claims, overall operating costs, maintenance costs, duty illness costs, energy cost, and absenteeism due to illness. We feel that as a result we would see an increase in attendance, an increase in building usage, and an excellent winter training facility for all surrounding communities and a much safer working area for all employees. All equipment funded by this grant would be in-service as soon as possible.