



MONEY, MONEY, MONEY

One of the most frequent questions we get at WHP is “Do you know about any money that is available for building a Fire Training Tower?” The traditional method that most departments use is the tried and true method of budgeting for a training facility in the capital improvement plan. Helping show how a facility can benefit the community is a great step in looking for funding. However, throughout the years, we have also worked with departments that have looked to alternative funding resources to make their project happen.

LEASE/PURCHASE PLANS

There are a number of companies that deal exclusively in lease/purchase agreements with government entities and departments. You may not be able to afford \$200,000 for a tower, but your budget may be able to accommodate \$24,000 a year. If you factor in the cost of taking your employees out of your fire protection area for training, \$2,000 a month doesn't look like so much. We have worked with these agencies in the past and they can provide a breakdown of costs, interest rates, and payments based on length of loan, usually within 24 hours. Contact us for more information.

RURAL DEPARTMENTS

Some of our smaller municipalities have recently been able to obtain very low interest loans through federal funding programs made available for rural community development programs.

COLLABORATION WITH OTHER FIRE DEPARTMENTS

This is by far the most common source of outside funding. Several departments join together and build their tower in a central location. Some of our customers have managed to accomplish this fairly easily. For others, it has taken a long time as they have gone through various administrations, officers, etc. The secret seems to be having one person or a small number of people who are willing to spearhead the effort and stick with it. Customers that have done this offer one word of caution: they suggest it works best if one person is ultimately responsible for the building once it is completed. That person would work on scheduling, as well as supervision of training revolutions to see that building and materials are properly cared for, cleaned and stored.

RETHINK HOW YOU TRAIN



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COLLABORATION WITH LOCAL EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES

Several of our departments have worked with local junior colleges or vocational programs in high schools to share the financial burden in exchange for shared time.

COLLABORATION WITH INDUSTRY

Best case scenario, a local company provided a grant to pay for a tower for one of our customers. In our experience, that was a one-time event. But, some departments have worked with local industry and obtained either partial funding or ongoing training agreements that involved the industry either paying the fire department to provide required training for their employees. Having a long-term training agreement with local industry in your pocket, along with a lease-purchase proposal that fits with your budget, can go a long way when you are attempting to justify a purchase with your governing board.

STATE FIRE MARSHALL

While they may not have grant money available, they sometimes know who does.

STATE AND FEDERAL SENATORS AND REPRESENTATIVES

Some of our customers have worked with legislators who have championed their cause for fire training and have either established regional grant programs for centers throughout their states or been instrumental in obtaining grants on a one-time basis.

CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTIONS

This is not the norm, but we have provided a tower for an organization that was 100% funded by a charitable organization. It might be worth looking into local organizations to see if they would fund, or help fund at least part of your project.

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INTERNET

There is sometimes money out there if you are willing to put in the time to hunt for it. (Check out search words like “community development grants”, “fire training grants”. In addition to using search engines, consider monitoring websites related to major fire journals, fire-related industries, FDIC, IAFF, or sites like FEMA's Responder Knowledge Base (www.rkb.us) that have their finger on the pulse of what is going on industry-wide.)

GSA

GSA, the General Services Administration, helps other federal agencies get products, services and consulting advice they need from federal and commercial sources. For more information on the requirements to buy through GSA. GSA purchases have proven to be an excellent option for some of our customers. Visit www.gsaadvantage.gov - Search our contract GS-07F-5448P

Whatever you choose for your source of funding, WHP would be pleased to work with you to provide quotes or estimates and help you put together the package for your proposed tower.

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