



CHELMSFORD FIRE DEPARTMENT

CHELMSFORD, MASSACHUSETTS 01824

FUNDING REQUEST

TO: Chief Gary Ryan
FROM: Deputy Chief Ryan Houle
DATE: February 12, 2026
RE: Legislative Funding

Purpose. Funding for two equipment priorities: three Conex trailers to establish a training facility, and one Motorola APX8000xe portable radio for the department's new command vehicle and shift commander position. Both acquisitions directly advance regional collaboration, interoperability, and firefighter safety.

REGIONAL TRAINING INFRASTRUCTURE: THREE CONEX TRAILERS

Project Description. The Chelmsford, Lowell, and Tewksbury Fire Departments have established a collaborative regional training partnerships. The foundation of this is that shared training reduces costs and directly improves the effectiveness of mutual aid responses, where personnel from multiple jurisdictions must operate as a cohesive unit under high-stress conditions. Three Conex trailers, configured as a two-story training structure, provide the permanent facility this initiative currently lacks. The proposed site sits near the Chelmsford-Billerica-Lowell-Tewksbury border, making it accessible to all partner departments for both the drill school and ongoing in-service training.

To support regional training needs, the training structure will enable:

- Live fire and non-fire training evolutions in compliance with NFPA 1403 and NFPA 1410
- Shared use across mutual aid partners
- In-service training for all member departments throughout the year
- Reduced dependency on condemned building acquisition and Nashua facility fees

Financial Need. Firefighting is a perishable skill. Execution under pressure in a live environment degrades without consistent repetition. A dedicated training structure removes the operational and logistical burden of sourcing acquired structures or paying per-hour facility fees

to out-of-state vendors. This is shared infrastructure with shared value across the region. The town's budget does not support capital construction of a training facility; earmark funding is the mechanism that makes this regional investment viable.

Cost Benefit. A permanent regional facility eliminates recurring vendor facility costs. The Nashua Fire-Rescue Training Facility currently charges \$200/hr for non-fire and \$300/hr for live fire evolutions. Four days of each type of training runs approximately \$13,000 per cycle. The Conex structure, once acquired, eliminates that expense permanently for three departments.

Statement of Effect. The requested funding will establish a facility used year-round by multiple jurisdictions. Beyond training value, the structure supports ISO Fire Suppression Rating Schedule credit toward live-fire facility use, a factor in community insurance rates. The primary effect, however, is operational: personnel from surrounding communities will be able to train together in realistic conditions, building the cohesion and shared proficiency that makes mutual aid effective when lives depend on it.

Cost Breakdown:

Dalion CIMC Container Co. Ltd. – 40 Ft. Conex Trailer x 3
Vendor: JP Rivard Trailer Sales, Inc. (delivery and setup included)
\$5,500.00 / unit x 3 units

TOTAL TRAINING FACILITY COST = \$16,500.00

BATTERY-POWERED RESCUE SAWS: HUSQVARNA K 1 PACE

Project Description. The Chelmsford Fire Department seeks funding for four Husqvarna K 1 PACE Rescue saws to advance its transition to battery-powered equipment and away from combustion engines. The department currently operates with a single battery-powered K12 saw across the entire fleet. With a ladder truck and rescue apparatus each outfitted with multiple K12s and varying blade configurations, acquiring four additional battery-powered units would improve operational uniformity and readiness across all frontline apparatus.

Background. The primary operational advantage of battery-powered rescue saws is reliability at the point of use. Combustion engine saws can flood when choked, resist starting in cold weather, and require a multi-step startup procedure including priming, choking, and pull-starting. Battery-powered saws require a single button press and throttle-up. That reduction in steps improves fireground efficiency and lowers the barrier for personnel with limited power saw experience, supporting a more consistent and transferable skill set across the department.

Battery-powered saws also operate significantly quieter than combustion alternatives. On a working fireground, where noise is constant and radio communication is the primary coordination tool, a quieter saw reduces the risk of critical transmissions being missed during

cutting operations. Unheard orders or condition changes during active saw use represent a direct life safety risk. Quieter equipment mitigates that risk.

Finally, battery-powered saws require less maintenance than gas-powered equivalents. With fewer moving parts, no oil changes, and no fuel mixing, they carry lower long-term maintenance costs and reduce the burden on department maintenance resources. Additionally, they provide a reduced carbon footprint compared to standard combustion engine powered saws, which provides the advantage of environmental friendliness along with ease of operator use.

Cost Breakdown:

Husqvarna K 1 PACE Rescue Saw x 4 (batteries purchased separately)

\$3,300.00 / unit x 4 units (average pricing, multiple vendors)

TOTAL SAW COST = \$13,200.00

TOTAL EQUIPMENT FUNDING REQUEST = \$29,700.00

Both items in this request serve the same underlying objective: a department that is better prepared to execute. The Conex training facility gives Chelmsford and its regional partners the infrastructure to build and sustain the skills this work demands. The K 1 PACE saws close a gap in the department's equipment profile, advancing the transition to battery-powered tools that are more reliable, quieter, and easier to maintain. The case for both is straightforward and the funding need is real.

Respectfully submitted,

Ryan Houle

Ryan Houle
Deputy Fire Chief