



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Pete Harckham

Harckham Inspects New Firefighting Equipment at Thornwood Fire Department

PETE HARCKHAM April 18, 2023

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Thornwood, NY – New York State Senator Pete Harckham visited the Thornwood Fire Department recently to inspect the new air compressor fill and workstation used to replenish the air cylinders for the self-contained breathing apparatuses (SCBAs) worn by the firefighters—all of which was purchased through a \$77,000 state grant he secured for the department.

“The best way to support our firefighters and first responders is to provide them with the resources, new technology and safeguards that allow them to carry out their high-level of service,” said Harckham. “I am proud to support our firefighters and use state funds to take some burden off of local taxpayers.

Thornwood and the surrounding communities will certainly benefit from these investments.”

SCBAs is a key piece of equipment for firefighters because it provides breathable air and the greatest amount of airway protection from toxic gases and harmful particles resulting from fires and other emergencies. In 1918, the first SCBA for practical firefighter use in the US, the Gibbs model, was perfected and manufactured at the Edison Laboratories in West Orange, New Jersey.

“One of the most important pieces of equipment a firefighter uses on an everyday basis is the self-contained breathing apparatus,” said assistant chief Ryan G. Rodgers of the Thornwood Fire Department. “In the past, once the 45-minute air cylinder from the breath apparatus is used and depleted, we would have to send the cylinders out to our vendor at a cost or take it to one of our neighboring fire departments to refill and place back in service. The purchase of our own air compressor fill and workstation in our headquarters allows us to fill our air cylinders and return them back into service as soon as possible. This would keep us at full capacity of cylinders for emergency responses and training sessions.”

“We are a small department, and for us to purchase this new equipment would be too big a part of our budget,” said Thornwood Fire District Commissioner James F. Finn. “Being able to fill our own air bottles is a big boost to our mission. We really appreciate Senator Harckham’s help here.”

When the Thornwood Fire Department grant was secured in October 2022, it pushed Harckham’s total to more than \$1 million in state funding he’d secured for firefighters and first responders in the 40th Senate District since 2019 to make critical vehicle and equipment acquisitions to ensure the safety of area residents.

The awarded grant funding was secured within the State and Municipal Facilities Program (SAM), which is among the grant programs administered by the Dormitory Authority of the State of New York (DASNY) to support community and economic development.