



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Pete Harckham

Harckham Secures \$100K for Westchester County Police Hazardous Response Vehicle

PETE HARCKHAM January 26, 2024

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Sen. Harckham with (l-r) Det. Nicholas Piqueras, Police Officer David Lincoln, County Executive George Latimer, Commissioner Terrance Raynor, Chief Inspector James Luciano, Deputy County Executive Ken Jenkins, Lt. Paul Cusano and Det. Thomas Barker

Valhalla, NY – New York State Senator Pete Harckham secured \$100,000 in state grant funding in 2022 for the Westchester County Department of Public Safety to purchase a Hazardous Response Vehicle, and yesterday he inspected the new “bomb squad” truck and its

auxiliary mobile robot used for explosives handling, SWAT operations and more.

The new hazardous response vehicle, with a Rosenbauer Rescue Body built on to 2022 Ford F550 Cab and Chassis, is replacing the county's existing former heavy-duty Hazardous Devices Unit (HDU) Bomb Response Vehicle, a 2008 GMC Utility Truck.

“One of my top priorities, as a Westchester legislator and in the Senate, has been making sure that county police and emergency personnel have up-to-date equipment and proper resources in order to safeguard our communities,” said Harckham. “These tumultuous times we are experiencing pose certain challenges in terms of public safety, and this new Hazardous Response Vehicle will benefit both police officers and residents. I am happy to have helped gain this important investment for the county while also alleviating some of the financial burden on taxpayers.”

The new Hazardous Response Vehicle has four-wheel drive capacity, giving it extra range throughout the county on back roads and remote areas while maintaining full equipment loads. The plan is to utilize the new vehicle for a minimum of 10 years of service, and the vehicle will be used as a regional tool to respond to bomb threats and hazardous device calls, as well as storing updated equipment to maintain the bomb squad's accreditation status.

Westchester County's Hazardous Devices Unit (HDU), also known as the Bomb Squad, is one of only 13 such units in New York State. The unit is accredited by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and is comprised of seven trained officers / technicians. In 2022, the HDU responded to 59 operational deployments and an additional 219 pre-event and dignitary security sweeps.

Westchester County Department of Public Safety Commissioner Terrance Raynor said, “Our Department is grateful to Senator Harckham for obtaining this significant grant for the

Hazardous Devices Unit. The funding enabled us to replace an aging, outdated vehicle, and it ensures that our bomb squad officers have the resources they need to keep themselves and the public safe. Our Hazardous Devices Unit not only supports all municipal police departments in Westchester, but it is a regional resource as well. HDU also assists law enforcement in Putnam and Dutchess counties when circumstances call for a highly trained bomb squad to respond.”

The full cost of the new Hazardous Response Vehicle was \$258,732. About two-thirds of the vehicle’s cost is being funded with a 2019 Bomb Squad Initiative grant awarded by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and administered through the New York State Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Services.

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. Harckham has delivered more than \$2 million of state grant funding to first responders and emergency personnel for critical vehicle and equipment investments in SD40 municipalities and nonprofits over the past four years.