

To: Aftermath 2019 Safety and Training Contest Essay
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It is well documented that Law Enforcement personnel are exposed often to various blood borne and airborne pathogens and infectious diseases as a result of their contact with the public. Possible exposures include infectious diseases such as HIV, hepatitis, tuberculosis, meningitis and MRSA. A Law Enforcement officer supplied with the proper personal protective equipment, and training in its proper use, is much less likely to be exposed. Proper personal protective equipment is important not only to ensure the health and safety of the officer, but also to ensure the health and safety of individuals who could potentially come into contact with an infected officer.

There are many types of Law Enforcement related activities that introduce officers to the risk of exposure, whether it is a medical related call, during the transportation of prisoners, or even during the booking process where an officer is in close proximity to individuals in a closed environment. It is important that officers are provided with the best possible tools and methods to prevent and minimize any potential exposure as a result of this type of work.

The East Hartford Police Department currently has OSHA-compliant General Orders regarding blood borne pathogens and infectious disease as well as an exposure control plan. The current plan provides all new officers with PPE kits and ensures that all officers attend yearly recertification training. The plan also ensures that officers have PPE kits readily accessible. Because maintaining operational PPE kits for each officers is of the utmost importance, the Department would like to expand their availability to include kits in all patrol cars, in personal patrol bags and expand the available locations within the Police Department. If the Department is awarded these kits, it will ensure that there are operational PPE kits available in all areas where an officer may require one, thus limiting our officer's risk of exposure.

The benefits associated with the acquisition of additional PPE kits are numerous and cannot be understated. This vital equipment would provide lifesaving protection to our Law Enforcement officers as first responders who encounter dangerous situations on a daily basis. This equipment would provide exposure protection to each officer before they are confronted with an incident which requires special equipment and protection. Furthermore, the community we serve will benefit because officers will have the ability to enter potential exposure situations more quickly in order to assist and possibly save lives due to the greater availability of personal protective equipment. Lastly, the acquisition of this equipment would also represent a cost savings to the Town and the citizens we serve.

Our department appreciates Aftermath's commitment to the protection and safety of Law Enforcement officers through this contest. It is important for

companies such as Aftermath to lead the way in ensuring all officers have the equipment necessary to protect and serve our communities.