

Somerset's giant flag damaged earlier this year

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A community group is asking for help to replace the giant 30-by-60-foot flag over the Pennsylvania Turnpike interchange in Somerset earlier this year.

Somerset County Flag Committee spokesman Stewart Saylor said that heavy winds in July caused the flag to get caught on the pulley mechanism. It took the help of a 180-foot crane to unhook the flag.

In the three months it took to bring in the crane, however, the flag had become damaged beyond reasonable repair.

Saylor said it cost the committee nearly \$4,000 to rent the crane. Repairing the flag would cost approximately \$500.

"It's drastically reduced our funds available for new flags or maintenance," he said.

The group started a GoFundMe page to raise \$3,900 for new flags and future maintenance. They had raised \$85.

The committee is also responsible for maintenance at the whole Veterans Memorial Plaza near the turnpike, which is on lease from the Quality Inn.

While the group waits for a new full-sized flag, other smaller flags will be flown this winter.

Saylor said the flags are taken down about once per month in the winter for repairs.

A new full-sized flag will cost about \$2,000.

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