

Washington State Department of Natural Resources

Volunteer Fire Assistance

2017 Phase 2 Grant Program

Introduction

The **Volunteer Fire Assistance (VFA)** program is funded through the US Department of Agriculture, Forest Service (USFS). The objective of the VFA program is to improve the capacity and capability of rural and volunteer fire protection districts that protect rural communities and play a substantial cooperative role in the suppression of wildland fires within or near federally managed lands.

The Phase 2 Grant Program is available to all Washington State fire districts/fire departments that meet the eligibility requirements listed below.

Available Funding

- The maximum grant award per fire district/fire department is **\$12,000**.
- Fire districts/fire departments may only submit one application.
- **Match requirement** for all eligible projects within the Volunteer Fire Assistance Program is 50% of project cost (one dollar of eligible match for each grant dollar expended).

Application Submittal

- Applications may be submitted from October 5, 2016 through November 30, 2016. Applications submitted after 5:00 PM on November 30, 2016 will not be considered for funding.
- Applications are available on the DNR [Fire District Assistance](#) webpage.
- Applications must be received by DNR no later than 5:00 PM on November 30, 2016.
- Applications must be filled out completely, signed by the fire chief or a commissioner, and submitted by one of the following methods:
 - Email: fepp_assist@dnr.wa.gov (attach a scanned copy of signed application)
 - Mail: Wildfire Division
ATTN: Phase 2 Grant Applications
Washington State Department of Natural Resources
1111 Washington Street SE
Olympia, WA 98504
- Hand Delivery to the address above.

Grant Award and Term

- Grant funding will be awarded to successful applicants by February 15, 2017.
- Projects must be completed and all reimbursement requests received by DNR no later than close of business March 15, 2018.
- Extensions to the grant term may be allowed at the sole discretion of DNR.

Eligibility

Fire District/Fire Department Eligibility

Fire districts/fire departments that meet the following requirements are eligible to apply for Phase 2 grants:

- Established under the laws of the state of Washington, and
- Respond to wildland fire on private, state, or federal lands, and
- Provide service to:
 - a rural area or a rural community with a population of 10,000 or less, or
 - a community with a population greater than 10,000 that includes service to a rural community of 10,000 or less (funding must be used to benefit the rural community), and
- Have one of the following agreements currently in place with DNR:
 - Forest Land Response Agreement & Federal Grant Agreement (FLRA), or
 - Fire District Assistance Agreement that includes “Attachment A - Assistance Grants” (FDA)

Project Eligibility

The following projects are eligible:

- **Federal Excess Personal Property (FEPP) generator replacement** – replacing FEPP generators with new generators or refurbishing generators acquired under the Firefighter Property Program.
- **Firefighter Property Conversion/Refurbishment** – Includes funding for transport and refurbishment of vehicles obtained through the Firefighter Property Program in support of wildfire suppression.
- **Non-Firefighter Property Acquisition/Refurbishment** – Includes funding for purchase and/or refurbishment of vehicles utilized in support of wildfire suppression.
- **Fire Equipment** – Equipment suitable for wildland fire use. Includes portable pumps, slip in tank/pump packages, water tanks (vehicle and porta tanks), and chainsaws. PPE and other equipment offered through Phase 1 is **not eligible** with the exception of hand tools, hose, and hose fittings.
- **Communications** – Includes the development of single or multi district communications systems, radios, vehicle, hand held, base stations, and repeater.
- **Training** – Includes the development and implementation of programs designed for training in grass or wildland fire suppression, including instructors, facility rental and materials.
- **Fire Prevention** – Includes the development and implementation of fire prevention education programs, including Firewise workshops or prevention planning, including GIS planning projects.
- **Dry Hydrant** – Includes planning, construction and operational use of a dry hydrant system.

Ineligible Projects

The following are not eligible for funding:

- Major expenditures such as building construction
- Land acquisition or building repairs
- Rural Emergency Medical Service programs
- Water line construction and hydrants
- Structural fire engines, ladder trucks, and structure PPE
- Wellness programs

Prioritization

DNR will consider the following when prioritizing grant applications for funding. Additional criteria may also be utilized:

- Fire district/fire department protection includes communities within priority areas identified in the Statewide Forest Action Plan
- Mutual aid response agreements with DNR or federal agencies
- Past DNR grant awards
- Project type
- Volunteer firefighter membership and fire district/fire department fire response budget
- Wildland fire response call volume

Federal Grant Equipment Purchases

Fire districts/fire departments are awarded Volunteer Fire Assistance funding under the terms and conditions of their current DNR agreement and award notification. Fire districts/fire departments receiving Volunteer Fire Assistance funding are, at a minimum, required to maintain equipment accountability records for equipment items purchased having a value of \$5,000 or greater. Such items must be identified as property acquired under the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act and Federal approval secured prior to future disposition. Fire districts/fire departments must comply with Federal regulations relating to equipment and supplies acquired by state and local governments ([§200.313 Equipment](#)).

Grants awarded for purchase of equipment with a value of \$5,000 or greater may require the fire district/fire department to complete an equipment justification and certification form providing details of the purchase (i.e. make, model, etc.), and with DNR assistance obtain USFS approval prior to actual acquisition. As an example, if a project intends to purchase equipment with grant funds, and the specifics of the equipment are not known at the time of grant application submittal or award, the district will need to provide equipment specific information for approval prior to actual purchase.

Other Requirements

- **Reimbursable grant** – the fire district/fire department must apply to DNR for reimbursement of eligible costs. Requests for reimbursement must be submitted on DNR approved forms and include supporting documentation providing evidence of incurred costs, fire district/fire department payment of costs and required match contribution. Only costs incurred after grant award are eligible for reimbursement.
- **Eligible match** may be actual cash, donated materials or in-kind labor. All matching funds require documentation and required match must be included with any grant reimbursement request. Only match incurred as part of the project and after September 1, 2016 are eligible. In-kind labor documentation must include laborer's name, dates and hours of work, and type of work performed. Donation documentation must identify what is donated, value of donation, name of donor and be signed by the donor.
- **In-kind labor rate** is \$16 per hour.
- **Project modifications** must have prior written approval by DNR, and in no case will DNR approve additional funding to complete the project.
- **Unused grant funds** cannot be transferred to other non-funded projects, agencies, or departments.