

Volunteer Fire Assistance Grant Program
Part A / Guidelines
Arizona State Forestry / U.S. Forest Service - Cooperative Forestry Assistance

(Wildland and Structural Fire Suppression Equipment, Training, and Organizing Only)

I. Description of Program

The Arizona State Forestry Division, with assistance from the USDA, Forest Service, administers the Volunteer Fire Assistance Grant Program. This Program is authorized by the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1990, (Farm Bill) and provides financial assistance to train, organize, and equip fire departments in rural areas and rural communities to prevent and suppress fires. A rural community is defined as having 10,000 or less population.

II. Fund Information

A requirement of the Volunteer Fire Assistance Grant Program is a 50/50 match for the federal funds on a reimbursable basis. You must spend your money or provide your in-kind services prior to receiving the grant funds.

The maximum grant amount for each project is limited to \$20,000. The total project that you are planning should be shown on the Project Proposal/Budget indicating how the VFA funds would fit into the community's overall plan. Applicants may submit for projects less than \$20,000.

(Note: You can not claim expenditures encumbered prior to the signing of the grant contract.)

The project must be completed and funds expended prior to December 31, 2011.

Grant funds may only be used for reimbursement of actual costs incurred. Matching expenditures from the fire department may take a number of forms:

- a. Actual funds expended from fire department budget.
- b. Funds donated to fire department or community from outside sources.
- c. Contributed time for personnel and equipment: Contributed time is considered as donated time in the form of labor and/or equipment utilized in order to complete VFA projects. Volunteer time and equipment use are appropriate matching items. Volunteer labor cost can be calculated at \$18.77 per hour. Professional services can be billed at the person's actual hourly rate. Amounts exceeding these general rates, are permissible, but must be justified in a budget narrative. Contact the VFA Program Manager. Donated equipment use can be handled by using equipment use rates lists or donor's documented estimate or invoice. Equipment rates are highly variable therefore, equipment rates will have to be accepted by Project Manager and or the District Forester prior to application approval.

Contributed time may also be applied to the training and organizing portions of the program (Student time or student credit hour are not eligible). Training expenses can be related to the actual out-of-pocket expenses, costs of equipment used for training, or labor expended (instructors) for training. You may claim contributed time for matching purposes. **However, excessive contributed time may be disallowed by the prioritization committee.**

- d. Communities may use Revenue Sharing Funds to match Volunteer Fire Assistance program funds under Public Law 94-488.
- e. With the exception of Revenue Sharing funds, an applicant cannot match federal funds with other federal funds.

III. Examples of Qualifying Projects

A. Training

1. Training through State Fire School, Arizona Wildfire Academy, community colleges, local intra or inter-departmental training, out-of-state specialized training, wildland training from the State Forester and etc.
2. Training expenses incurred for travel, lodging, meals and registration to participate in training classes.
3. Training or equipment and/or aids - including projectors, simulators, slide/video programs, training manuals, equipment utilized in practical (hands-on) exercises, development of a training program by outside sources and etc.

B. Organizing:

1. Costs of forming an organized fire district under ARS, Title 48.
2. Fire planning costs: Responses, Risk Assessments and Hazard Mitigation planning costs.

C. Equipment:

1. Renovation of equipment, including excess property acquired through any recognized source for the purpose of fire protection.
2. Fire tools - including wildland and structural.
3. Personal protective equipment.
4. SCBA's

5. Communications equipment.
6. Hose and nozzles.
7. Purchase and/or lease purchase of fire trucks or other equipment and/or property acquired through any recognized source for purpose of fire protection.
8. Pumps.

Grant recipients will be required to assist the State Forestry Division to maintain ongoing inventory of all high value equipment purchases. The Federal Government (USDA Forest Service) will retain a vested interest in all equipment purchases with a unit value of \$5,000 or more.

IV. Examples of Non-Qualifying Projects:

A. Training:

1. Emergency Medical Technician or Paramedic Training or related material.
2. Salary of trainee's or other related expenditures such as backfilling or overtime costs.

B. Organization: Furniture, telephone, personnel, postage, uniforms, badges, stationery or insurance costs.

C. Equipment:

1. Building or office construction.
2. Paramedic - EMT equipment.
3. Fire hydrant construction.
4. Land purchases.

V. Program Grant Specifications for Radio Equipment Purchases:

Purpose:

The primary purpose is to assist departments with two-way radio communications which will meet the EIA/TIA 102A standards for interoperability for public safety agencies (APCO Project 25 Compliant) and specifically be used to communicate with the Arizona State Forestry Division and other Federal, State and Local Firefighting agencies on wildland/urban interface fires.

General Requirements:

Two-way radio communication equipment purchased under this grant application must meet or exceed the APCO Project 25 Standards (EIA/TIA102A). Radio equipment will need to operate in the VHF Spectrum of 136Mhz. to 174Mhz. and be fully P25 compliant. Additionally, this includes two-way radios capable of operating in VHF - FM Analog, wideband and narrowband and/or VHF Digital modes on **channel by channel** basis, minimum channel of 48 or greater, channel display of 7 characters or greater. Your local two-way radio communications dealer or distributor can assist you with information about manufacturers that currently produce P 25 compliant two-way radio equipment and or radio equipment that meets this general requirement.

VI. Definition Wildland/Urban Interface

NFPA 299, *Standard for Protection of Life and Property from Wildfire*, 1991 edition, defined wildland/urban interface as "an area where development and wildland fuels meet at a well-defined boundary."

VII. Selection Information:

Upon receipt of the grant application, each project will be graded and ranked according to a weighted point award system. This system will be available for review after the deadline at the Office of the State Forester, 1110 West Washington Avenue, Suite 100, Phoenix, Arizona 85007. Each applicant will be notified, by mail, of the status of their grant questionnaire/application. Additional information and instructions will be given to the selected applicants.

VIII. Procurement:

All procurement of equipment, services, or supplies with state and/or federal grant funds will require adherence to Arizona State Procurement Code or other documented competitive procurement practices.

IX. How to Apply:

Interested and qualifying communities, please complete the attached Questionnaire/Application and Proposed Project Description Forms. The standard application forms must be used.

Applicants must complete Part B and Part C in Microsoft Word and submit electronically to the Arizona State Forestry Division by March 28, 2011. A printed copy shall also be mailed and postmarked prior to the deadline of March 28th.

Postal Address: ATTENTION:
2011 Arizona VFA Grants Programs
1110 W. Washington Suite 100
Phoenix, AZ 85007

Email Address: grants@azsf.gov

Questions? Contact your District Forester Office:

Counties

Address

*Gila, La Paz, Maricopa,
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