
**VOLUNTEER FIRE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
GRANT ANNOUNCEMENT
FOR YEAR 2017**

The Mississippi Forestry Commission expects to receive federal grant funds for 2017 for sub-grants to rural communities under the Volunteer Fire Assistance Program (formerly known as the Rural Community Fire Protection Program). This program provides grants up to \$4,500 to eligible fire departments for the purchase of firefighting equipment. To qualify for the maximum \$4,500, the applicant's "total cost of project" must be at least \$4,500 for qualifying firefighting equipment. (Note: A change from prior years is that the department is no longer required to match the \$4,500 grant with an additional \$4,500 expenditure of their own, i.e., spend \$9,000 dollars in department funds to receive \$4,500 back in grant funds. The Mississippi Forestry Commission is now using its fire expenditures to match the grant funds for the USDA Forest Service.)

NOTE: Communities imposing strict boundary limits which exclude residences that are logically a part of the community, charge a fee for responses, or respond only to those who are paying members of the fire protection district are ineligible to participate in this program.

This grant packet contains the application and other information needed for applying for a grant under the Volunteer Fire Assistance Program. There are five parts of the grant application, all of which must be correctly completed and signed where indicated by the Chief Executive Officer (mayor of city or town, president of chartered rural fire departments, fire chiefs, county fire coordinator, etc.) of the entity making application. **Incomplete applications, including applications not signed by the Chief Executive Officer, will be returned without action.**

The five parts of the grant application are:

- Part I: Application for Volunteer Fire Assistance Program (Form 490.1)
- Part II: Program Narrative
- Part III: Firefighting Equipment List
- Part IV: Applicant Survey
- Part V: Assurances

To be considered for participation in this program, **a completed and signed application must be returned to the Forestry Commission by 5:00 p.m., Wednesday, August 9, 2017.** Mail to:

**Mississippi Forestry Commission
Volunteer Fire Assistance Program
Attn: Martha Moore
3139 Hwy 468 West
Pearl, MS 39208**

The completion date for approved projects is Wednesday, January 31, 2018. On or before this date, approved applicants must have purchased, be in receipt of, paid for all the project equipment covered by the application, and submitted the Project Completion Report (Form 490.1A, to be sent to approved grant recipients) with all attachments as called for.

Each applicant will be notified by letter if their application is approved or not approved.

To obtain a Volunteer Fire Assistance grant application, please contact Keith Beatty or Martha Moore at (601) 420-6017 or visit our website at www.mfc.state.ms.us.

GENERAL INFORMATION

How May Grant Funds Be Used?

Due to the small amount of funds available for the entire state program, only applications for assistance in **purchasing wildland firefighting equipment** will be accepted. Approved items of equipment include the following:

1. Tanks, pumps, hose, hose reels, hose fittings, nozzles, sirens, emergency lights and ladders.
2. Slip-on units, complete (tanks, pump, hose, etc.) for converting trucks to pumper units.
3. Communication equipment (two-way radios) with statewide firefighting frequency (154.160 MHZ) and "pagers" with tone alert and audio receivers.
4. Hand tools (back-pack pumps, fire axes, pike poles, drip torches, fire flaps, fire extinguishers, etc.)
5. Wildland protective items for firemen (Nomex shirts, pants, jumpsuits, helmets, boots, gloves, etc.)
6. Combustion products, warning devices for residences.

NOTE: Communities imposing strict boundary limits which exclude residences that are logically a part of the community, charge a fee for responses, or respond only to those who are paying members of the fire protection district are ineligible to participate in this program.

Some Items Will Not Be Approved

1. Salaries, labor charges, service charges, utilities, installation or repair charges, supplies (batteries, etc.)
2. Trucks to be converted to fire apparatuses.
3. Cost of structural improvements or real estate.
4. Fire trucks complete (chassis, tank, pump, etc.).
5. Costs of rescue units or other rescue equipment **which will not be carried on fire trucks**.
6. Citizen band radios.
7. Cost for equipment on hand, ordered or purchased prior to the announcement date.

NOTE: If in doubt about any item of equipment, check with the Forestry Commission before including it in Part III: Firefighting Equipment List. **No changes will be allowed** in the items of equipment to be purchased unless prior approval is secured.

What Records Must Be Kept?

As in most federal grant programs, certain records and documents must be maintained by approved applicants. These records are subject to state and federal audit. The following records must be kept by the applicant.

1. Approved application (Form 490.1) signed by State Forester and complete with all attachments.
2. Canceled checks, signed receipts and other proof of full payment for equipment purchased.
3. Records which show source of applicant's funds and how funds were expended.
4. Records showing receipt and disposition of the check for the federal matching funds.
5. Copy of project completion report (Form 490.1A, to be sent to approved grant recipients).
6. Property records showing current status of equipment purchased with grant funds.

NOTE: The federal Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-102, attachments N and O apply to all grants. The federal government will retain an interest in the equipment purchased with federal matching funds.

Instructions for Completing Application (Form 490.1)

1. Enter the name and complete mailing address of the organization which will undertake the grant project.
2. Enter the amount of federal funds requested. This amount cannot exceed \$4,500.00.
3. Enter total amount to be expended on this project. This amount will be the same figure entered as "Total Cost" on Part III: Firefighting Equipment List, included in the grant packet.
4. Circle the type of fire department.
5. Circle the U.S. Congressional District in which the fire department is located.
6. Enter the number of residents who will directly benefit from this project. This will be all persons residing in the project area.
7. Check the legal basis for your fire department's existence. If other, explain.
8. Complete the certification before submitting the application. Signature indicates applicant has authority to enter into this agreement with the Mississippi Forestry Commission.

There are **five parts** of the grant application packet. Form 490.1 is Part I. All five parts must be correctly completed and signed where indicated by the Chief Executive Officer (mayor of city or town, president of chartered rural fire departments, etc.) of the entity making application. **Incomplete applications, including applications not signed by the Chief Executive Officer, will be returned without action.**

Mail application packet to:

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Volunteer Fire Assistance Program
Attn: Martha Moore
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Program Narrative

(Use additional sheets as necessary to completely describe your program.)

Instructions for Completing Program Narrative

The Program Narrative is an **important part** of your application and **must** be included therein. Discuss the following points and any other points you think will describe your fire protection project.

General Description of Project Area

Provide geographic description, specific fire hazards if any, general fire problems, etc.

Objectives and Need for Financial Assistance

- Discuss the absence of other means of fire protection in your project area.
- Show how the equipment to be acquired will increase your fire protection capability.

Results or Benefits Expected

- Discuss the continuing nature of your fire protection program. Describe source(s) of local funds. Is your funding source(s) adequate to maintain the program after the federal funds are depleted?
- State the number of people, homes, businesses, hospitals, schools, farm buildings, etc., and the number of square miles of area to benefit from this protection.

Approach

- Develop an Action Plan that includes what you plan to do with the equipment, the date by which the equipment can be obtained, and estimated total cost of project. List the specific items of equipment to be purchased and **current cost of each item** on the "Firefighting Equipment List" included in the grant packet. The total cost of all equipment listed is the total cost of project.
- List cooperators (other fire departments, etc.), if any, and give a description of your working relationship with them. If you are a part of a formally organized county-wide fire protection organization, so state and name the other fire departments involved.

Geographic Location

Attach map with the area to be protected outlined, and indicate the location of the fire protection equipment. If there are other fire departments in your county responsible for **rural** fire protection, indicate their area(s) of responsibility.

| APPLICANT SURVEY | | |
|---|---------------|---------------|
| <i>(It is important that all the following questions be answered. Provide appropriate answer where indicated.)</i> | | |
| 1. What is the total population of requesting community(s)? If for more than one community, state names and population of each: | _____ | |
| 2. Are funds for the "Total Cost of Project" on hand? | Yes | No |
| 3. What is the Insurance Protection Classification in the Applicant's protection area? (This information may be obtained from a local insurance agency.) <i>choose one</i> | | |
| 4. Does any other fire department provide primary fire protection to the Applicant's protection area? If "yes," give name(s) of fire department(s). | Yes | No |
| 5. Does Applicant have written cooperative agreements or formal plans with other fire departments? If answer is "yes," how many? Give names of fire departments and ATTACH MAPS showing areas of responsibility for each department. | Yes | No |
| 6. Is Applicant a part of a county-wide fire protection organization? If "yes," give names of other fire departments and ATTACH MAPS showing areas of responsibility for each department. | Yes | No |
| 7. Does Applicant have or has it applied for an Essential Community Facility Loan from the Farmers Home Administration that relates to improved fire protection? If "yes," state what the loan is for. If loan was denied, state why. | Yes | No |
| 8. What is the average number of fires per year in the Applicant's protection area? (Do not include fires suppressed by the Mississippi Forestry Commission.) | _____ | |
| 9. How many fire tankers and pumpers does the Applicant have? | Tankers _____ | Pumpers _____ |
| 10. How many structures (residences, businesses, stores, schools, churches, etc.) are in the Applicant's area of responsibility? | _____ | |
| 11. How many structures (residences, businesses, stores, schools, churches, etc.) in the Applicant's area of responsibility were destroyed in the previous year? | _____ | |
| 12. Does the project boundary limits exclude rural residences that are logically a part of the community? | Yes | No |
| 13. Does applicant limit response to those who contribute or pay dues? | Yes | No |
| 14. Is a fee charged for fire responses? | Yes | No |
| 15. Is your department NIMS (National Incident Management System) compliant? | Yes | No |

ASSURANCES

The Applicant hereby assures and certifies that he will comply with the regulations, policies, guidelines, and requirements, including OMB Circulars Nos. A--87, A--95, and A--102, as they relate to the application, acceptance and use of federal funds for this federally assisted project. Also, the Applicant assures and certifies with respect to the grant that:

1. It possesses legal authority to apply for the grant; that a resolution, motion or similar action has been duly adopted or passed as an official act of the applicant's governing body, authorizing the filing of the application, including all understandings and assurances contained therein, and directing and authorizing the person identified as the official representative of the applicant to act in connection with the application and to provide such additional information as may be required.
2. It will comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (P.L. 88-352) and in accordance with Title VI of that Act, no person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity for which the applicant receives federal financial assistance, and will immediately take any measures necessary to effectuate this agreement.
3. It will comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (43 USC 2000d) prohibiting employment discrimination where (1) the primary purpose of a grant is to provide employment or (2) discriminatory employment practices will result in unequal treatment of persons who are or should be benefitting from the grant-aided activity.
4. It will comply with requirements of the provisions of the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisitions Act of 1970 (P.L. 91-646) which provides for fair and equitable treatment of persons displaced as a result of federal and federally assisted programs.
5. It will comply with the provisions of the Hatch Act which limit the political activity of employees.
6. It will comply with the minimum wage and maximum hours provisions of the federal Fair Labor Standards Act, as they apply to hospital and educational institution employees of state and local governments.
7. It will establish safeguards to prohibit employees from using their positions for a purpose that is or gives the appearance of being motivated by a desire for private gain for themselves or others, particularly those with whom they have family, business, or other ties.
8. It will give the grantor agency or the Comptroller General through any authorized representative the access to and the right to examine all records, books, papers, or documents related to the grant.
9. It will comply with all requirements imposed by the federal grantor agency concerning special requirements of law, program requirements, and other administrative requirements approved in accordance with Office of Management and Budget Circular No. A-102.

Authorized Signature

Title

Date

Volunteer Fire Assistance Grant Program

Funding for this program is provided through the USDA Forest Service. It is administered in Mississippi by the Mississippi Forestry Commission.



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