



Department of Environmental Conservation

Volunteer Fire Assistance Grants

Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978 Volunteer Fire Assistance

Program Summary

The Volunteer Fire Assistance Grant (VFA) program is made possible by the Federal Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978. The grant is a 50/50 matching funds program. Its purpose is to make funds available to rural fire companies for the purchase of wildland firefighting equipment such as portable backpack pumps, Nomex protective clothing, hand tools, hard hats, hose, portable radios and dry hydrants.

Program Funding

The Volunteer Fire Assistance Grant program is funded by the U.S. Forest Service and administered by the New York Department of Environmental Conservation (The Department). The Department received an appropriation of more than \$400,000 for the 2016 federal fiscal year.

Match Requirement

Fire departments eligible to apply may receive grant funding up to \$1,500 for the purchase of firefighting equipment. Fire departments are required to equally match (50/50) the amount of the grant award. As an example, a fire department is required to spend up to \$3,000 on the purchase of approved firefighting equipment in order to be reimbursed an equal grant amount up to \$1,500.

Eligibility Criteria

- A. A single fire department serving a rural area or rural community with a population of 10,000 or less is eligible (latest census).
- B. Area fire departments (fire districts, townships, etc.) may serve an aggregate population of greater than 10,000 as long as the service area of the fire department includes a rural area or rural community having a population of 10,000 or less. The VFA funding must be used to benefit the rural population.
- C. A single county or town with a population of over 10,000 that is served by two or more fire districts operating entirely within the bounds of the county or town may qualify as long as the service area of a given fire department includes a rural area or rural community or the population of the fire department's jurisdiction is 10,000 or less. The VFA funding must be used for the rural area.
- D. A single community with a population greater than 10,000 and having a single fire department with one or more fire stations may qualify. The fire department must have a service area that includes a rural area or community that does not exceed 10,000 populations. The VFA funding must be used only for the benefit of the rural population. Similarly a single community with a population greater than

10,000 that also provides fire protection to an adjoining rural community of 10,000 or less population by contract may also be eligible provided the VFA funding is used entirely to support the rural community.

- E. A single community fire department serving a population greater than 10,000 and not providing protection to a rural area or to a rural community is not eligible for VFA financial assistance.

A fire department's success or failure in receiving a grant is based on a point system with points received for:

1. Population (ex: less than 1,000 = 10 points; 1,000-2,000 = 9 points, and so on)
 2. I.S.O. rating (ex: rating of 9 = 10 points; 5/5x = 5 points; 8 or less = 1 point)
 3. Newly organized department = 10 points
 4. Native American Indian community in protection area = 10 points
- Points will be deducted on a pro-rated basis from the total of these four factors if a grant was awarded to the fire department within the last five years.
 - A point for use in future years will be added for each year the applicant submits a VFA grant application and does not receive a grant award.
 - Only one application per local jurisdiction will be considered.
 - Only expenses directly related to fire suppression are eligible for funding [purchasing portable pumps, portable backpack pumps, hand tools, hose, light-weight fireproof clothing (Nomex), hard hats, turnout gear, personal protective equipment, portable radios, generators and dry hydrants]. Grant funding cannot be applied to any single item costing \$5,000 or more.
 - Expenditures not directly related to firefighting, such as search and rescue, acquisition of land, construction of buildings and facilities, major apparatus purchases and maintenance items are not eligible for funding.
 - Upon notification of receiving a VFA grant award, fire departments are required to complete all grant process paperwork by October 31, 2016. This process includes: purchasing equipment, providing copies of invoices as proof of purchase, and scheduling an equipment inspection by a local NYS Forest Ranger.

Applications

The application deadline is May 31, 2016.

You may access a [Volunteer Fire Assistance Grant application \(PDF 169 KB\)](#) here, as well as at the top right corner of this page.

Applications will be accepted by mail at:

NYS Department of Environmental Conservation
Division of Forest Protection
625 Broadway, 3rd Floor
Albany, NY 12233-2560

E-mail to: vfagrant@dec.ny.gov.

If sending electronically, save the application and send as an attachment.

2016 VOLUNTEER FIRE ASSISTANCE (VFA) GRANT APPLICATION
Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978
PL95-313 SECTION

SECTION 1: Fire Department Information

APPLICATION DEADLINE: MAY 31, 2016

Fire Department ID# (5 digit)	<input type="text"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Non-Profit	<input type="radio"/>	Gov't Entity	<input type="radio"/>	Tribal Org	<input type="radio"/>	Other
Name of Fire Department	<input type="text"/>								
Mailing Address (Line 1)	<input type="text"/>								
Physical Address (Line 2)	<input type="text"/>								
City	<input type="text"/>	State	<input type="text"/>	Zip Code	<input type="text"/>	County	<input type="text"/>		
What Town is your firehouse located in?	<input type="text"/>								
The population of your fire district is:	<input type="text"/>								
Are you a new Fire Department organized within the past 12 months?					<input type="radio"/>	Yes	<input type="radio"/>	No	
Are there any Native American Indian Communities within your fire district?					<input type="radio"/>	Yes	<input type="radio"/>	No	
The I.S.O. Fire Protection Insurance Rating of your jurisdiction is:	<input type="text"/>								
If the name of your jurisdiction in the I.S.O. listing is not the same as the name of your fire department, indicate the name of the jurisdiction below:									
<input type="text"/>									

SECTION 2: Contact Information

Salutation	First Name	Last Name	Suffix
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Phone Number	Fax Number	Email Address	
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	

SECTION 3: Project Information:

Describe Project and Impact on Fire Departments Total Protection Plan: NOTE: Only costs incurred after January 1, 2016 can be used for this year's grant.

SECTION 3: Project Information (continued):

Please list equipment and cost below: **NOTE: VFA Grant funding CANNOT be applied to any single item costing \$5,000 or more.**

Enter the total amount of financial assistance requested*:

*NOTE: At least 50% of the cost of your grant project must be available from other sources.

SECTION 4: Certification of Eligibility

NOTE: A single community fire department serving a population greater than 10,000 AND NOT providing protection to a rural area or rural community is NOT ELIGIBLE for VFA financial assistance.

Please select the choice that represents your fire department's eligibility:

☐ A. ☐ B. ☐ C. ☐ D.

- A. A single fire department serving a rural area or rural community with a population of 10,000 or less is eligible. (per latest census)
- B. Area fire departments (fire districts, townships, etc.) may serve an aggregate population of greater than 10,000 as long as the service area of the fire department includes a rural area or rural community having a population of 10,000 or less. The VFA funding must be used to benefit the rural population.
- C. A single county or town with a population of over 10,000 that is served by two or more fire districts operating entirely within the bounds of the county or town may qualify as long as the service area of a given fire department includes a rural area or rural community or the population of the fire department's jurisdiction is 10,000 or less. The VFA funding must be used for the rural area.
- D. A single community with a population greater than 10,000 and having a single fire department with one or more fire stations may qualify. The fire dept must have a service area that includes a rural area or community that does not exceed 10,000 populations. The VFA funding must be used only for the benefit of the rural population. Similarly a single community with population greater than 10,000 that also provides fire protection to an adjoining rural community of 10,000 or less population by contract may also be eligible provided the VFA funding is used entirely to support the rural community.

☐

By checking this box, I certify that all information provided is accurate and the above-named fire department is eligible for grant assistance. I attest that, based on my personal knowledge, the above information is accurate and true. I acknowledge that pursuant to Environmental Conservation Law Section 3-0301(2)(q), any false statements made herein are punishable in accordance to Section 210.45 of the New York State Penal Code.

Certifying Applicant (signature / print name)

Date Submitted:

SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS: Email to: Save & Attach Application to vfagrant@dec.ny.gov

OR

Mail to: NYS Department of Environmental Conservation
Division of Forest Protection
625 Broadway - 3rd Floor
Albany, NY 12233-2560

APPLICATION DEADLINE: MAY 31, 2016