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Volunteer Fire Assistance Cooperative Fire Protection Program

A guide to Completing the Kansas Cost Share Application

This attachment serves as a guide to assist you in the completion of the Kansas Volunteer Fire Assistance application. Please make every effort to answer every question and fill in every blank on the application form. Leaving questions unanswered will be considered an incomplete application, subject to rejection.

About the Volunteer Fire Assistance Program

The purpose of the Volunteer Fire Assistance (VFA) Program, is to provide Federal financial, technical, and other assistance to State Foresters and other appropriate officials to organize, train 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.**

Applications for a VFA grant may be placed for virtually any type of fire prevention or suppression equipment such as wildfire gear, bunker gear, hose, nozzles, SCBA, tools, etc. The rules of the program are basically four in number. **Wildfire equipment may be given precedence.**

1. *VFA purchases have to be fire related.* Medical equipment or gear and rescue and extrication tools may not be purchased using VFA funding.
2. Structural equipment purchases are not specifically prohibited, however they may not rank as high as wildland equipment. Applications for funding to convert FEPP equipment is allowed, and may be used in a variety of areas such as adding tanks, pumps and fire suppression equipment. Items that would be normal maintenance or replacement will score lower, such as tires, oil, replacement parts, etc. The purchase of wildfire or urban interface apparatus, tools and appliances is encouraged.
3. VFA funding is not authorized for the purchase, construction, or renovation of capital improvements such as fire stations or pressurized water systems.
4. Training material may be purchased utilizing VFA funds.
5. Currently, no single award will exceed \$9999.00. ***However, if the applicant exceeds the total for the award and provides cancelled checks and invoices for the excess, contingent upon available funds, additional money may be awarded after all awards are satisfied.***

If there are questions about whether the project or equipment purchases meets the guidelines of the VFA program, call the State Office. The entire VFA desk guide is also available online at www.fs.fed.us/fire/planning/help/index.htm

Be sure to fill in the fire department's name, identifying number (FDID) and Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN) in *Contact Information*. An FDID number is assigned to most fire departments by the Kansas

State Fire Marshal for the purpose of fire reporting. It consists of the 2 letter county abbreviation followed by a three-digit number (RL303 for example). Some departments may not have an individual FDID assigned to them if they work with another organization that submits fire reports for them. ***If this is the case with your department, note whose FDID# is being used.***

The FEIN number must also be provided to receive full consideration. The FEIN is a 9 digit number usually beginning with 48-. The department cannot receive reimbursement without a FEIN number. Check the “Where Can I Find . . . ?” section for hints on where to find this number. **NO FDID# and /or FEIN# WILL result in the application moving to the bottom of the list.**

Also note the deadline for applications is listed at the top and bottom of the cover page and the last page. Applications must be postmarked not later than the printed deadline to receive full consideration in the review process. The application deadline will be extended on a daily basis until VFA funding is received by KFS from the US Forest Service. If the VFA grant funds are received prior to the printed deadline, applications postmarked after that deadline will not be considered.

DON'T PROCRASTINATE

Qualification Criteria: States how VFA funding can be utilized.

Application Identification: Projects submitted by a group of departments working together or by a countywide fire department may be funded at a higher level (determined case by case). If this applies to your project, be sure to list the departments involved in the project and their share of the cost within the narrative. Departments that apply as part of a group or a countywide fire department may not submit an individual department application.

Evaluation Criteria:

Questions 1 through 14: These questions ask for information regarding the applying department or group of department/districts, the community and area served.

---NO MEDICAL, EXTRICATION OR RESCUE EQUIPMENT!---

Project Request. List the items you wish to purchase, the **cost per item/unit** and the **quantity and the total**. If you wish to purchase more than 10 different items/units you should use an addition sheet. Write See additional sheet across this section.

DO NOT UNDER ESTIMATE THE COST OF YOUR PROJECT, HOWEVER, OBVIOUS PADDING CAN RESULT IN A DENIAL OF THE ENTIRE APPLICATION . Remember that the department is responsible for 50% the Project. Requests for large projects from a single department may not be funded entirely.

Narrative. Keep it to the point, explain how the purchases will be utilized and describe the benefits to the department/districts and/or the community served. This is especially important if the project is something out of the ordinary. The better the project is explained, the better the chances of it being funded, especially if two applications are very close. *“It will help us fight fire better”, doesn’t really tell me anything I don’t already know, so be creative.*

Signatures. The application **must be signed by both the fire chief and fire department financial representative.** If your fiscal officer is a city/county/township officer, please mention their title. **The award letter will be sent to the address listed below the “Primary Contact’s” signature.**

Contact Information. This information is very important to ensure we are able to contact you in a timely manner. Please provide contact information for the person who will be acting as your primary contact for the purposes of

administering this grant, whether it is the fire chief, assistant chief, treasurer, etc. As personnel can change during the course of a year, **we need a mailing address of the fire department instead of an individual if at all possible.**

General Information

All applicants will receive a response regarding the outcome of an application (award or denial). Successful applicants will receive a detailed letter stating how much was awarded, what can be purchased, what paperwork needs to be submitted for reimbursement and a completion deadline. If the department encounters an emergency and needs to purchase something other than what is listed as an approved purchase on the award letter, it must be approved by the KFS Fire Management Coordinator prior to the purchase being made!

Award amount - Will include two figures, a total award and the (KFS) Federal share, which is 50% of the total award. Since the program is a “reimbursement” program, the department must be able to fund the entire award prior to receiving the reimbursement. Applicants will not be penalized for spending more than the awarded amount, but no cost-share will be granted beyond the stated Federal share. Also, if the final cost of the project is less than the total award, the (KFS) Federal share will be reduced to 50% of the actual final project cost. For example, if \$4000 is awarded but \$5000 is the final cost, the (KFS) Federal share will still be just 50% of the awarded amount, or \$2000. If \$4000 is awarded and the final cost is only \$3000, the (KFS) Federal share will be adjusted down to \$1500.

Paperwork required - Following completion of your purchases, submit copies of invoices provided by the company and copies of warrants or cancelled checks by the deadline for the project as stated in the award letter. The small photocopy of your check sent by your bank will be sufficient.

Deadlines - In the event your department submits a successful application, it is vital that the purchasing process begin immediately. If you wait too long, you run the risk of losing your award if it is not completed by the final deadline. A number of circumstances can result in a department not being able to meet the grant deadline, don't make a cavalier attitude one of them. Successful applicants should have ample time to make purchases, usually 5-6 months. It is suggested that the department have a list already to make the purchases when the award is received. Recent history has indicted back orders and discontinued items have caused shipments to be delayed.

Where Can I Find...

...Fire Department Identification Number (FDID)? Call the Kansas State Fire Marshals' Office at (785) 296 - 3401.

... Federal Employee Identification Number (FEIN)? Check with your city, county or township office, or the entity that has purchasing authority for the department.

...Equipment Pricing? Listed below are options for fire equipment purchases. You are not required to purchase from this list of vendors.

Emergency Fire Equipment Co.
Toll free: (800) 544-6038
www.crimson-fire.com

Hays Fire Equipment
Toll Free: (800) 269-4093

KSFFA (training materials)
www.ksffa.com

MES, Inc.
Toll free: (800) 541-9111
www.mesglobal.com
Casco Industries, Inc.
Toll free: (888) 382-6703

Wildfire Pacific
Toll free: (800) 426-5207
www.wildfire-equipment.com
Jerry Ingram Fire & Rescue
Toll free: (888) 400-2819

The Supply Cache
Toll free: (800) 839-0821
www.firecache.com
Weis Fire & Safety Equip.
Toll free: (800) 689-9347

National Firefighter
Toll free: (800) 423-8347
www.nationalfirefighter.com

Cascade Fire Equipment Co.
Toll Free: (800) 654-7049
www.cascadefire.com

W.S. Darley & Co.
Toll free: (800) 323-0244
www.edarley.com

Kansas Forest Service
(for General Ser. Admin. Purchases)
2610 Claflin Rd
Manhattan, KS 66502
785-532-3300

Watts Welding & Man.
9505 Healy Rd
Brookville, KS 67425
785-283-4802
wattswelding2001@twinvalley.net

Chief Supply
Toll free:(800) 733-9281
www.chiefsupply.com

The inclusion in, or omission from, this list does not constitute an endorsement or non-endorsement of a company. They are included here to assist fire departments in finding distributors so cost comparisons can be made to arrive at the best price. They are listed in no particular order.

For more information, contact:

Ross Hauck, Fire Management Coordinator
Kansas Forest Service
2610 Claflin Road, Manhattan, KS 66502
Phone: (785) 532-3314
Fax: (785) 532-3305
rhauck@ksu.edu
www.kansasforests.org



***HAVE YOU READ THIS ENTIRE GUIDE?
IT IS FOR YOUR BENEFIT!***