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SECRETARY

ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT CABINET
DEPARTMENT FOR NATURAL RESOURCES
DIVISION OF FORESTRY

ALLEN LUTTRELL
Commissioner

627 COMANCHE TRAIL
FRANKFORT, KY 40601
TELEPHONE: 502-564-4496
TELEFAX: 502-564-6553
http://forestry.ky.gov

February 23, 2016

Dear Fire Chief:

The Kentucky Division of Forestry is currently accepting grant applications for the 2016 Volunteer Fire Assistance (VFA) Grant Program. The objective of the program is to improve the capability and effectiveness of Kentucky's rural volunteer fire departments to protect lives and property. This will be accomplished through organizing, training, and equipping local firefighters for fire protection in rural areas, including communities of 10,000 persons or less.

Grants will be awarded in a range from a minimum of $1,000.00 to a maximum of $5,000.00 and will be administered through a 50/50 reimbursement system. Volunteer fire departments will carry out grant projects and submit invoices to the Kentucky Division of Forestry that document total program cost. Grantees will be reimbursed 50 percent of the total project cost.

Eligible items that can be purchased with grant funds include: training materials, pumps, hoses, tanks, small fire suppression equipment, personal protective equipment (PPE) such as Nomex® fire shelters, gloves, lights, etc. Additional details on the types of projects along with application forms and proposal instructions are available in the grant information package.

The fire department and Division of Forestry must sign a <u>Memorandum of Agreement</u> before any project is started. The fire department would then be required to adhere to the project approved in its application.

Grant proposals must be received in the Frankfort Office of the Kentucky Division of Forestry by 4:30 P.M. EDT on April 29, 2016.

If you have any questions, please contact Michael Harp, Fire Management Program Specialist, at (502) 564-2860 extension 109 or mike.harp@ky.gov.

Sincerely,

William H Steele Jr

William H. Steele Jr.
Director

WHS:MEH:nhl

Volunteer Fire Assistance Grant

The Kentucky Division of Forestry, in cooperation with the USDA Forest Service, is encouraging rural fire departments to apply for Volunteer Fire Assistance grant funds for 2016. The following information describes the 2016 Volunteer Fire Assistance Grant Program.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

- Organize, train, and equip fire departments in unprotected rural areas and rural communities.
- Assist qualifying fire departments in saving lives and protecting property in unprotected or inadequately protected rural communities.
- Prevent or reduce loss of life, protect financial investments, and enhance environmental quality to revitalize rural America.
- Increase the opportunity for rural fire departments to acquire training and current information on fire prevention techniques.

INELIGIBLE PROPOSALS

This cost-share program is for programs, projects, or activities **not currently being funded** and is not intended to be a substitute for **existing** funding levels. The focus of this program is to support **new initiatives** that would not otherwise occur without grant funds.

NOTE: VFA funding is not authorized for:

- **A single piece of equipment costing $5,000.00 or more.**
- **No trucks, cars, ATV's or utility type vehicles.**
- **Capital improvements such as fire stations or pressurized water systems.**
- **Land acquisitions.**
- **Medical equipment.**
- **Fire hose greater than 2½ inch in diameter.**
- **Equipment not wildland fire related.**
- **Extrication type equipment.**

ELIGIBILITY

- A single fire department serving a rural area or a rural community with a population of 10,000 or less (latest Census) may qualify.
- A single fire department that is currently using the National Integrated Incident Management System (NIIMS).
- 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 a rural community having a population of 10,000 or less. The VFA funding must be used to benefit the rural population.
- A single county or town with a population 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, a 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.
- 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 in population. The VFA funding must be used only for the benefit of the rural population.
- A single community with a population greater than 10,000 in population may also be eligible provided the VFA funding is used entirely to support the rural community.
- 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 single community fire department that is at least 80% volunteer.

MATCHING FUND REQUIREMENTS

This is a cost-share grant. The federal government and the grantee share the total cost of the project. Funds are awarded on a 50/50 matching basis. The grantee must match the amount awarded by providing at least 50 percent of the total project cost. The grantee's share of the match must be in either cash or in-kind services. The grantee's share cannot come from a federal source, and the grant cannot be used as a match for any other federal cost-share project.

Cash purchase matches are direct, out-of-pocket expenditures for eligible project activities that are supported by paid invoices, cancelled checks, and signed receipts.

In-kind contributions matches includes on-hand supplies, third party donations of supplies or equipment, professional services at the professional rate, or time spent by employees or volunteers on eligible project activities. Volunteer hours may be applied to the project at rates appropriate to the skill level of the volunteer and/or the nature of the work being performed. Assistance provided by federal employees may not be claimed.

Grantees are required to maintain project records in accordance with all applicable federal and state regulations. This includes: (1) records shall comply with generally accepted accounting principles; (2) records will document allowable costs; (3) records will be supported by source documentation, such as cancelled checks, paid invoices, signed contracts; and (4) records will be maintained for <u>three</u> years following payment.

EXAMPLES OF VFA PROJECTS

- Conversion of FEPP/DoD vehicles to water tenders, engines, brush trucks, and equipment trucks.
- Purchase of fire prevention/education or training material.
- Purchase wildland fire fighting Nomex (yellow jumpsuits, yellow shirts, green pants).
- Purchase of fire equipment and supplies to enhance wildland suppression capabilities.
- Upgrade inter-department radio communications system, including mobile and handheld radios, base stations, and repeaters.

FUNDING RANGES

The funding range for grant money requested is $1,000.00 to $5,000.00. Total project cost should be at least twice the grant amount requested. Award amounts will be limited to $5,000.00 per federal identification number.

GRANT APPLICATION REVIEW

All proposals will be graded and ranked by the local Kentucky Division of Forestry region offices. The Director of the Division of Forestry will allocate funds and award grants based on the recommendations of our region offices.

Scoring criteria will be weighted more heavily for applications requesting wildland PPE and number of years since applicant was last awarded a VFA grant.

DEADLINES

Applications must be **received** at the Kentucky Division of Forestry, 627 Comanche Trail, Frankfort, KY, by 4:30 P.M. EDT on April 29, 2016. Absolutely no applications will be accepted after the deadline. The Director will notify grantees of funding approval by July 1, 2016. Once the Memorandums of Agreement are returned and finalized within the date guidelines, grants will have an official starting date of November 2, 2016, and an ending date of June 1, 2017.

Faxed or e-mailed copies will not be accepted. The original application plus two copies must be submitted.

Grantees may submit paperwork for reimbursement as soon as the grant project is complete. However, all grantees must have projects completed and all required reimbursement documentation into the Division of Forestry by June 1, 2017.

PAYMENT PROCESS

- Grantees must submit proof of expenditures by providing **all invoices** needed to support the Commonwealth of Kentucky Standard Invoice.
- All costs must be documented correctly before reimbursement is made.
- Grantees are paid on a reimbursement basis **after** the project is completed. **No partial reimbursements or payments are permitted.**
- **Unapproved grant expenses,** those not in the original approved application or those that don't have written approval from the Kentucky Division of Forestry during the grant process, **will not be paid. Purchases and/or projects must match what was included in the application that was approved.**

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

For assistance, contact:

- Fire Management Program Specialist, Michael Harp, at (800) 866-0555.
- Grant package will also be available on the Kentucky Division of Forestry's web site at forestry.ky.gov.

PROPOSAL FORMAT

Written narratives must be included with the application form and should not exceed one page. Grant proposals should clearly indicate a need for volunteer fire assistance and must adhere to the following format. Please remember to be as thorough as possible; project proposals are most likely to be funded when they include all of the following. Incomplete applications will not score high enough to be funded and cannot be graded competitively. **Remember to include the original application plus two complete copies of the application.**

1. Narrative (not to exceed one page):
   - Clearly states the purpose and the objective of the project.
   - States how the project will impact long-range wildfire suppression goals.
   - State how the project will provide safe wildland fire suppression.
   - Details how the project will be accomplished by addressing the following:
     - Participants (personnel, volunteers, sponsors, etc.).
     - Enhancement of wildfire/urban interface fire suppression capacity or training.
     - Timetable.
     - Administration of project.
     - End product/result.

2. Detailed budget:
   - **Include <u>each</u> of the following in each application:**
     - Detailed breakdown of how **grant funds** will be used.
     - All sources of **cash matches** (donated items, contractor fees, etc.).
     - All sources of **in-kind services** (donated time, etc.).

In order for an application to be considered it must meet the following guidelines:

- All applications **must** contain a written narrative.
- All applications received **must** be on the official form F-16.
- No faxed applications will be accepted.
- No single ticket item of $5,000.00 or more will not be accepted.
- No vehicles, (trucks, cars, ATVs or utility type vehicles,)

Any application received that violates the provisions above **will not be accepted**.

Form F-16
Rev. 3-14

KENTUCKY DIVISION OF FORESTRY
VOLUNTEER FIRE ASSISTANCE (VFA) GRANT APPLICATION

Name of rural fire department _____

Mailing address _____
(Street or P.O. Box) (City) (Zip Code)

County _____ Business Telephone _____ Fax _____

Contact Person _____ Title _____ Email _____

Chief's Name _____ Email _____

Is your department located in an incorporated town? _____
(Yes or No)

Population of town _____

Area now protected (or proposed) _____
(Square Miles)

Estimated population of protected area _____

Year fire department established _____

Federal Identification Number ***(required)*** _____

DUNS Number ***(required)*** _____

List total funds received from taxing authorities (such as city, county, rural fire districts, etc.)

_____

_____

_____

Describe your present firefighting vehicular equipment.

Type	Make/Year/Model	Pumping Capacity (GPM)	Water Carrying Capacity (Gal)

List the items to be purchased (i.e., 4 pairs Nomex pants, 600 ft. 1½-inch hose, 100 training workbooks, etc.).

Name of Item	Unit Cost	Total Cost
Total		

Has your department received VFA grant funds or purchased small tools with VFA funds before?

Yes_____ No_____

Is your fire department currently using National Incident Management System (NIMS).

Yes_____ No_____

Grant Funds Requested: 50/50 Matching Funds (round to nearest dollar)

Grant Funds Requested: $_____ (not more than 50 percent of total)
Cash Match: $_____
In-kind Match: $_____
Total Project Amount: $_____

Submit Application To: Kentucky Division of Forestry
VFA Grant Program
627 Comanche Trail
Frankfort, Kentucky 40601

Application Deadline: April 29, 2016

To the best of my knowledge the above information is true and correct, and I am authorized by the_____Fire Department to represent their interests.

Signed _____

_____
(Title)

_____

_____
(Address)

Date _____