

**VOLUNTEER FIRE ASSISTANCE (VFA)
FUNDS AVAILABLE
Application deadline: July 15, 2020**

The Connecticut Division of Forestry is currently accepting grant applications for the 2020 Volunteer Fire Assistance (VFA) Grant Program, in anticipation of funding from the USDA Forest Service. The objective of the program is to improve the capability and effectiveness of Connecticut'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 towns of 10,000 persons or less.

Eligibility:

Below are the eligibility criteria for application to the VFA program. The Forestry Division will select qualifying projects, using a modified point system. In selecting projects the Forestry Division will consider:

1. A fire department located in a town with a population of 10,000, or less, according to the 2010 census.
2. Provide funding for projects that involve training, prevention and equipment purchases. Projects may be for prevention, control or suppression of fire. (Medical, rescue and non-fire purchases will not be eligible).
3. Approve a cost-sharing rate of 50% not to exceed \$2,500 per grant. This is a reimbursable payment. (This means the fire department spends 100% of the grant project and the Forestry Division will reimburse the fire department 50% up to \$2,500. For example, the Department project is \$5,000 or more the Division will reimburse \$2,500, if the Department project is \$2,000 the Division will reimburse \$1,000).
4. Rejecting applications from Departments that did not complete awarded 2019 VFA Program projects.
5. Confirm that matching funds are available from the Department.
6. On a sliding scale, priority will be given to Departments who have not received recent VFA funding. Priority will be given to projects where at least 25% of funding is used for training(**except training for medical /rescue is not eligible**).
7. Eligible Departments must be NIMS compliant to qualify.

Application Deadline and Program Timing

1. Applications must be returned to the Forestry Division by July 15, 2020. Mail applications to: Helene Hochholzer, PO Box 535, Colchester, CT 06415. Any questions can be directed to Kevin Grady at (860) 455-0699 or kevin.grady@ct.gov.
2. Applicants will be notified after the Forestry Division receives notification from the U.S. Forest Service of Financial Commitment; we anticipate this commitment by July 25, 2020.

3. ***Expenditures by successful applicants cannot be made until after notification of award by the Forestry Division. Any purchases made prior to grant award are ineligible for the VFA program.***
4. Any changes to the approved project(s), after a grant has been awarded, must be requested in writing to the Fire Supervisor for review. A written response of approval or rejection will be made in a timely fashion to the requesting department.
5. Projects must be completed by **February 15, 2021**. **All paperwork must be received or postmarked by March 5th, 2021**. Successful applicants will have to submit **proof of payment**. This will be in the form of cancelled checks and signed invoices of receipt indicating the item(s) have been paid-in-full.

Matching Fund Requirements

This is a cost-share grant. The Forestry Division and the Department share the total cost of the project. Funds are awarded on a 50/50 matching basis. The Department must match the amount awarded by providing at least 50 percent of the total project cost. The Department's share of the match must be in either cash or in-kind services. The Department'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 contribution matches includes use of existing 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.

Payment Process

The Department must document all costs correctly before reimbursement is made.

Departments are paid on a reimbursement basis **after** the project is completed.

Unapproved grant expenses, those not in the original approved application or those that don't have written approval from the Forestry Division during the grant process **will not be paid**.

Purchases and/or projects must match what was included in the application that was approved.

Please Note:

We plan to make Notification of Grant Awards by **August 3, 2020**. Items cannot be purchased under this program until Notification has been received from the Forestry Division.

2020 VOLUNTEER FIRE ASSISTANCE

Fire Department/Company

Organization Name:

Communities Served:

Federal Tax ID:

DUNS #:

Street Address:

City, State, Zip

Type of Organization: Municipal Private Other

Fire Chief

Name:

E-Mail:

Phone (work/cell):

Contact Person (if different, must be Deputy Chief of Asst. Chief)

Name:

Title:

E-Mail:

Phone (work/cell):

Does your fire department respond to all local fire calls? Yes No

Does your fire department take fire suppression action on all fires when called? Yes No

List the number of fire calls in calendar year 2019: **Structure:** _____
Grass/Woods: _____
Other: _____ (do **not** include ambulance or rescue calls)

Population of Town according to the 2010 Federal Census:

Using Insurance Services Office (ISO) ratings, what is the predominant dwelling ISO rating class in your town:

Does your Department/Town have a written plan to improve the ISO rating? Yes No

Town 2019 Grand List: \$

What percentage of your 2019 Department budget was obtained from Town/Municipal/Fire District funds (taxes)? %

Will your Department be able to complete the project by February 15 and submit proof of paid expenses, by March 5th,2021? Yes No

2020 VOLUNTEER FIRE ASSISTANCE

Project

Brief Project Overview:
 (Be as complete as possible in the space provided. Attach an additional page, if needed)

Project Budget:

Expenditure/Item	Qty #	Item \$	Total \$		Grant Request \$	Other \$ (match)
TOTAL						

List planned expenditures or work activities in the left-hand column (i.e., Training, Equipment items). Provide specific prices and quantity for each type of item (i.e., 10 pairs of nomex plants at \$85 each, \$850 total). Attached a more detailed list or vendor quote if needed.

In the right hand columns, identify the portion of the cost to be funded by the grant and the portion that will be provided as match (i.e., Total = \$1,400, Grant Request = \$700, Match = \$700)

I certify that all prior statements are true and accurate to the best of my knowledge, that matching funds are available, and that my Department is NIMS compliant.

Signature

Title

Name (please print)

Best contact Phone Number