



Fire Management Handbook  
Policy 817

## Rural Fire Capacity Program

---

In accordance with [Executive Order 2020-02, Transparency in Agency Guidance Documents](#), guidance documents promulgated by the department are not new laws. They represent an interpretation of existing law, except as authorized by Idaho Code or incorporated into a contract.

### Agency Contact

Chief, Bureau of Fire Management

### Purpose

Congress has recognized that fire protection in rural communities is generally lacking or inadequate. To improve this situation, Congress authorized the Rural Fire Capacity (RFC) program, formerly known as the Volunteer Fire Assistance (VFA) program. This is a cooperative program between Idaho Department of Lands (IDL) and USDA Forest Service, State and Private Forestry, which provides financial and technical assistance to organize, train, and equip local forces for fire protection and suppression.

### Applicability

Applies to IDL and Association Fire Wardens and Assistant Fire Wardens.

---

## 1. Associated Policies

- A. Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Web Portal
- B. System for Award Management (SAM) Web Portal
- C. State of Idaho Division of Professional-Technical Education
- D. Fire Service Organization GSA Purchases, FMH 841

## 2. Exception Authorization

Exceptions to this policy may be granted by the Chief, Bureau Fire Management, or the State Forester.

## 3. Definitions

None

## 4. Policy

State Foresters are designated as the administrators of the program through a cooperative agreement with the USDA Forest Service, State and Private Forestry. In Idaho, Fire Wardens are designated as the Idaho Department of Lands contact with the local community Fire Service Organizations (FSO) and Rangeland Fire Protection Associations (RFPA).

## 5. Procedures

### A. Project Applications

RFC applications will be submitted on a **Rural Fire Capacity Grant Application, Attachment 1**, to IDL or Timber Protective Association Fire Wardens. Fire Wardens must assure the application meets the requirements of the program. Only those meeting requirements will qualify for financial assistance.

To provide a stable framework for program users, the following timetable will be used:

#### 1. April 1:

- a. Program opens for applications.
- b. Applications and instructions mailed to Idaho's FSOs and RFPAs.
- c. Applications are submitted by FSOs and RFPAs to IDL and Timber Protective Association Fire Wardens for review.
- d. After review, applications are emailed to the IDL Bureau of Fire Management. Originals are kept at the A/D/A office until the retention period has been met.

#### 2. June/July:

- a. Applications are prioritized by IDL in collaboration with representatives from Idaho's fire community.
- b. Successful and unsuccessful applicants are notified of grant funding status by IDL Bureau of Fire Management.

### B. Eligibility Requirements

Fire Wardens should carefully review each application and make sure the application complies with the following requirements before forwarding to the Bureau of Fire Management for consideration.

1. Each applicant/recipient of a federal grant is required to have an active Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number and maintain current registration in the Central Contractor Registry (CCR) accessible through the System for Award Management (SAM) portal. See detailed explanation of requirements in **Federal Requirements for Rural Fire Capacity Applicants/Recipients, Attachment 2**.
2. IDL RFC Assistance will not be available to an FSO or RFPA applicant who is not a participant in the County Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) process for their county. In addition, all requests for RFC assistance listed on the application should be identified in the applicant

county's CWPP or periodic update/addendum. Any new FSO or RFPA will have a maximum of five years from their inception to become a participant in the CWPP process for their county.

3. A single FSO or RFPA serving a rural area or a rural community with a population of 10,000 or less is eligible (latest Census).
4. FSOs or RFPAs (fire districts, townships, etc.) may serve an aggregate population of greater than 10,000 as long as the service area of the FSO or RFPA includes a rural area or a rural community having a population of 10,000 or less. The RFC funding must be used to benefit the rural population.
5. A single county or town with a population over 10,000 that is served by two or more FSOs or RFPAs operating entirely within the bounds of the county or town may qualify as long as the service area of a given FSO or RFPA includes a rural area, or a rural community, or the population of the FSO or RFPA's jurisdiction is 10,000 or less. The RFC funding must be used for the rural area.
6. A single community with a population greater than 10,000 and having a single FSO or RFPA with one or more fire stations may qualify. The FSO or RFPA must have a service area that includes a rural area or community that does not exceed 10,000 population. The RFC 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 RFC funding is used entirely to support the rural community.
7. A single community FSO or RFPA serving a population greater than 10,000, and not providing protection to a rural area or to a rural community, is **not eligible** for RFC financial assistance.
8. While paid FSOs or RFPAs are not excluded from participation in the RFC program, targeting of grants to qualifying FSOs or RFPAs having a membership comprised at least 80 percent volunteer firefighters is encouraged.
9. The FSO or RFPAs share (match) of the financial assistance must be available at the time of application. Match must be "hard" (cash) match; non-reimbursable out-of-pocket expenses where the subrecipient is responsible for payment. Applicants may not derive their share from other sources of federal government assistance. Note: FSOs/RFPAs must be able to provide a hard (cash) match of at least ten percent of grant funds being requested.
10. Application must be completed **in full** and **signed** by the FSO's Fire Chief or RFPA's Chairman in order to be considered.
11. When developing the RFC Grant Application, contact the nearest IDL Forest Protective District Fire Warden or Timber Protective Association Fire Warden for assistance with obtaining pricing quotes for items available through the Coeur d'Alene Interagency Fire Cache.
12. When it is possible to order items through the Coeur d'Alene Interagency Fire Cache, but the FSO or RFPA elects not to do so, only **equivalent or lower priced PPE and equipment will be considered for reimbursement**. Any expenditure over and above this pricing **will not** be reimbursed.
13. Wildland firefighting boots **will not** be funded.

14. Fire Shelters – These grant funds will not cover a personal shelter for every member of the applicant’s FSO or RFPA. IDL will only consider shelters for the number of seats on wildland fire apparatus.
15. Communications Equipment –All radios purchased must be narrow band and specified as such on the vendor quote. Radios purchased must be compliant with the applicant county’s radio plan.
16. Training – There are several state agencies responsible for training of personnel. Applicant should pursue these avenues before applying for funding through this grant by contacting the local IDL, Timber Protective Association, Bureau of Land Management, or US Forest Service office.
17. Project Request – Provide a detailed description of how this request will improve the response capability within the designated service area for which the applicant’s FSO or RFPA is first and foremost responsible.

### **C. Project Payments**

Once the project is completed, the grant recipient **must sign and return a copy of the Award Agreement Letter**, along with the following:

1. Itemized receipts
2. **Paid** invoices (or a bank statement showing the check or credit card payment has cleared the bank)
3. A completed Request for Taxpayer Identification Number and Certification, W-9, found on the IRS website
4. A completed USDA Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility and Voluntary Exclusion - Lower Tier Covered Transactions, AD-1048

The required forms are enclosed with the Award Agreement Letter to the successful applicant. **Reimbursement will not be processed without these documents.**

Fire Wardens ordering items on behalf of the FSOs and RFPAs will follow the process outlined in Fire Service Organization Defense Logistics Agency Purchases, FMH 841. **The grant recipient must include paid invoices and proof of payment for purchases in the reimbursement package** submitted to the IDL or Timber Protective Association Fire Warden, following the same process as with any other vendor. Proof of payment documentation can be a bank statement showing the cleared check or credit card payment or an invoice showing the total due is zero.

When submitting the request for reimbursement, the recipient must submit documents demonstrating the ten percent hard (cash) match expenditure in order to be reimbursed the full amount of the grant award.

**All requests for reimbursement must be submitted to the Fire Wardens by February 28 following the date of award.**

Fire Wardens will check all reimbursement documents for accuracy and completeness and will submit the request via email for reimbursement to the Bureau of Fire Management for payment.

**APPLICATION DUE JUNE 1**

		<b>IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF LANDS RURAL FIRE CAPACITY GRANT APPLICATION</b>			Available electronically on the web at: <a href="http://www.idl.idaho.gov">www.idl.idaho.gov</a>	
Name of Fire Service Organization (FSO) or Rangeland Fire Protection Association (RFPA):				Date:		
Active DUNS Number	Current CCR Registration?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Taxpayer Identification Number – TIN			
Mailing Address:				Phone:		
City:		State: ID	ZIP:	County:		
Name and Title of Person Making Application:		E-mail Address:				
Population of Service Area:	Number of Seats on Wildland Apparatus:	Number of Firefighters in FSO or RFPA:				
		Volunteer:	Paid (if any):	Total:		
<b>Attach a detailed description of project.</b>		Description attached? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>				
<b>Attach an itemized estimate and/or vendor quote for all equipment and/or services. Check with your local IDL Area/District/Assn.</b>				Estimate/Quote Attached? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		

CATEGORIES	GRANT FUNDS 90%	HARD MATCH 10% Required	TOTAL
Category 1 – Organization of New FSO or RFPA <i>Building, land, and/or maintenance will not be funded.</i>			
Category 2 – Firefighter Training <i>List audio visual equipment in Category 5 – All Other Equipment.</i>			
Category 3 – Personal Protective Equipment <i>Please Note: Wildland firefighting boots will not be funded.</i>			
Category 4 – Radio and Communications Equipment			
Category 5 – All Other Equipment			
<b>TOTAL GRANT REQUEST</b>	\$		
<b>TOTAL COST OF PROJECT</b>	Grant Funds + Match =		\$

Is this project/need identified in your County Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) or annual CWPP project priority update?  
*New FSOs and RFPA's have a maximum of five years from their inception to become a participant in the CWPP process for their County.  
 Contact your County Emergency Management Coordinator or Local Emergency Planning Committee for current CWPP.*

**New FSO or RFPA?** Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ If yes, year established: \_\_\_\_\_ In CWPP or Update? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

Is your FSO or RFPA located in a high, medium, or low risk area as identified in your County Wildfire Protection Plan?  
 High \_\_\_ Medium \_\_\_ Low \_\_\_

Fire occurrences *three-year average*: \_\_\_\_\_ Will this project result in reduced insurance ratings? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

Did you report fire incidents to the State Fire Marshal? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

List community(ies) assisted by this project. \_\_\_\_\_

Has applicant applied for and/or received grant funds for specific project(s) listed above from any other federal, state, or private agency? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

If yes, list agency name and dollar amount: Agency Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Amount \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this application to your local Idaho Department of Lands Fire Protective District/Area or Timber Protective Association Office no later than **June 1**. Office location information available at [www.idl.idaho.gov](http://www.idl.idaho.gov).

**APPLICATION DUE JUNE 1**

By signing this application, I acknowledge the following:

\_\_\_ I have reviewed this application in its entirety and the answers are accurate to the best of my knowledge.

\_\_\_ I have attached a detailed description and price quotes for the funds being requested.

\_\_\_ The application must be physically at the local IDL office by close of business on June 1. Postmarks do not qualify.

\_\_\_ The RFC grant is reimbursable. This means the FSO must pay the entire invoice for items purchased before submitting paperwork for reimbursement. Federal guidelines prohibit payment to the FSO without proof of FSO expending funds on awarded items.

\_\_\_ I understand the deadline to order from the Cache is December 15.

\_\_\_ I understand the deadline for reimbursement is February 28.

\_\_\_ If there is a change in chief, all criteria and deadlines remain in place.

Name of Fire Chief or Chairman:	
Signature of Fire Chief or Chairman:  <i>Application will not be considered unless signed by Fire Chief/Chairman.</i>	

## FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR RURAL CAPACITY GRANT APPLICANTS

A. **At the time of application** for a RFC grant, documentation demonstrating the applicant holds an **active DUNS number and current CCR registration** must be submitted (a copy of the web page confirming DUNS number and CCR registration). The DUNS number must be filled in on the Application, and CCR registration confirmation box checked. This information will be verified prior to the application being considered for funding.

1. **DUNS Number and CCR/SAM Registration:** Each applicant/recipient of a federal grant is required to have an active Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number and to be registered in the Central Contractor Registry (CCR) accessible through the System for Award Management (SAM) portal <https://www.sam.gov/SAM/>.

DUNS number means the nine-digit number established and assigned by Dun and Bradstreet, Inc. (D&B) to uniquely identify business entities. A DUNS number may be obtained from D&B by telephone (currently 866.705.5711) or the internet (currently <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>). The DUNS number is required in order to register in the CCR. The DUNS number and CCR registration must be updated each year.



**fedgov.dnb.com**



**www.sam.gov**

B. **If the applicant is successful and receives a RFC grant award**, at the time of reimbursement the above requirements must be met, and the following documents must be submitted along with a **signed copy of the Award Agreement Letter**:

1. **Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility and Voluntary Exclusion - Lower Tier Covered Transactions, Form AD-1048;**

Each Grantee must certify that no vendor or contractor debarred or suspended from being able to work under a federal grant, according to the terms of 2 CFR Part 180, has received any money under this grant project by signing the **Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility and Voluntary Exclusion - Lower Tier Covered Transactions, Form AD-1048**. Additionally, should the Grantee or any of their principals receive a transmittal letter or other official federal notice of debarment or suspension, they shall notify the Idaho Department of Lands Federal Grant Financial Specialist without delay. This applies whether the exclusion, debarment, or suspension is voluntary or involuntary.

2. **Request for Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN) and Certification, Form W-9;** this form must be **filled out, signed, and dated**.
3. Documentation demonstrating **proof of payment** and **paid itemized invoices** listing all items purchased, including those purchases demonstrating the 10% match requirement.