

Volunteer Fire Assistance Program Wildland Protective Equipment

The Texas A&M Forest Service receives a limited amount of federal funds through the USFS Volunteer Fire Assistance Program. These federal funds may be used in combination with state funds to provide assistance to eligible fire departments. Grants are awarded for the purchase of wildland personal protective equipment. Application must be made through the Rural Volunteer Fire Department Assistance Program (HB 2604) using TFS Form FO-400, Application for Rural Fire Defense Assistance.

The cost-share rate for Wildland Personal Protective equipment is 90% of the actual cost not to exceed the maximum allocation of \$8,400.00.

The cost-share rate for a Fire Shelter is 75% of the actual cost not to exceed the maximum unit cost shown below:

WILDLAND PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

LIST OF ELIGIBLE ITEMS FOR REIMBURSEMENT

ARAMID (NOMEX) COVERALLS
ARAMID (NOMEX) PANT
ARAMID (NOMEX) SHIRT
ARAMID (NOMEX) JACKET
WILDLAND GLOVES
WILDLAND HARDHAT
WILDLAND GOGGLES
EAR/NECK/FACE PROTECTORS
REFLECTIVE TRIM
FIRE SHELTER (75% OF THE ACTUAL COST UP TO \$235)

Items purchased that are not listed above will not be eligible for cost-share reimbursement.

Wildland Personal Protective Equipment must meet the requirements of NFPA 1977 and must be made of flame resistant aramid, para-aramid, or meta-aramid fabric. The aramid fabric must be rated at least 5.5 ounces per square yard or higher. PPE garments made with any percentage of cotton, cotton blend fabrics, nylon blend fabrics, or polyester blend fabrics are not eligible for cost-share reimbursement.

Note: The cost of gear bags is not reimbursable.

Grants are available to chartered volunteer and part-volunteer / part-paid fire departments that qualify for grant assistance under HB 2604 eligibility rules.

NOTE: For fire departments that apply using federal tax identification numbers belonging to a city or county, the TFS reimbursement check will be issued naming both the fire department and the city / county as the payees.

Volunteer Fire Assistance Program

Wildland Protective Equipment Guidelines

Requirements for grant assistance are:

The volunteer or part paid fire department must be chartered, have 20 or fewer paid members, and have a federal tax identification number.

The fire department must make formal application for grant assistance by submitting an Application for Rural Fire Defense Assistance (Form FO-400) and a completed IRS W-9 form.

Applications will be evaluated by the Texas A&M Forest Service for eligibility and priority.

Grant funds may not be used to purchase pre-owned PPE. Only new PPE is eligible for grant assistance.

The fire department will be notified in writing when the grant is approved. A purchase made before the grant approval date will not be eligible for reimbursement.

Following notification, the department is granted 6 months from the approval date to complete the purchase and to submit proper documentation for reimbursement. If the need arises, a 6-month extension may be granted before the grant expiration date.

Procedure for TFS Firesafe Purchases:

1. Following notification of approval, the fire department should submit to the TFS a completed Firesafe order form indicating cost-share and a copy of the grant approval notification letter. If your department receives an approval to purchase both wildland & structural PPE please submit the requested items on separate order forms with separate methods of payment. If the department is submitting an order for other Firesafe items, please do so on a separate order form from the PPE cost-share items.
2. All orders must be accompanied by a check, purchase order or money order for the department's portion of the order submitted. The department's portion is defined as 10% of the total cost of the order, including the shipping charge and any amount the department owes over the 90% allocation assigned. ***If your department needs assistance calculating its portion of the order please feel free to contact Ruth Ann Smith at 936-639-8130.*** If a Purchase Order is submitted, please send an invoice with proof of payment to the TFS.
3. Requested items will be supplied by the TFS Firesafe Program and will be shipped by UPS to the fire department. (Backorders will be shipped as soon as equipment is available)

Procedure for Outside Vendor Purchases:

1. Locate and purchase equipment following notification of approval.
2. Submit a copy of the grant approval notification letter and **all paid vendor invoice(s) and copies of all checks or credit cards statements (proof of payment) to the TFS.**
3. TFS will reimburse the fire department 90% of the cost of Wildland PPE up to the specified amount shown on the approval letter. Fire Shelter reimbursements are 75% of the actual cost up to the specified amount.

*****Wildland personal protective clothing must meet the requirements of NFPA 1977 and must be made of flame resistant aramid, para-aramid, or meta-aramid fabric. The aramid fabric must be rated at least 5.5 ounces per square yard or higher. PPE garments made with any percentage of cotton, cotton blend fabrics, nylon blend fabrics, or polyester blend fabrics are not eligible for cost-share reimbursement.**