

September 2025

TO: FIRE PROTECTION AGENCIES IN IOWA

RE: Volunteer Fire Assistance Program – Grant Rules

Iowa expects to receive our Fiscal Year **2025** Grant funds for the Volunteer Fire Assistance Program as authorized by the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978. The main features of the program are (Please note that several deadlines have changed from the prior year):

1. Key objectives are saving lives and protecting property in rural areas.
2. Volunteer Fire Assistance Program will pay 50 percent of the cost (not to exceed a maximum of **\$4,500**) to successful grant applicants, with the local agencies also paying 50 percent. Local fire department funds **must** be available when the application is made. Local match funds may not be from a federal funding source.
3. **The deadline to submit applications is October 31, 2025.** Applications submitted via mail must be postmarked by the deadline date.
4. Allocated funds may only be used for equipment identified in the application form. Special requests can be made (buildings and vehicles are not eligible) but will require a more detailed description of the request and need.
5. **NO INDIVIDUAL ITEM CAN BE \$5,000 OR MORE.**
Call or email if you have questions.
6. Priority will be given to: (1) applicants who **have submitted** Iowa Wildland Fire Reports during 2024 & 2025, (2) acres of state land protected, (3) communities which have not received funds under this program in the previous funding period, (4) areas of greatest need, (5) departments who utilize Wildland PPE and who have strong wildland fire suppression requests.
7. The fire department must be registered with the State Fire Marshal's office and must file all incident reports in a timely manner.
8. Only communities with a population of 10,000 or less qualify.
9. All applications **must** be signed by the Fire Chief and the head of the local government agency or the financial manager for the department (i.e., mayor, chairperson of the township trustees, chairperson of the benefited fire district or fire agency, or the financial officer).
10. All applications **must submit a completed IRS Form W-9** confirming their Federal Tax ID # (this may belong to the fire department or the city) and they **must provide their UEI#**.
11. No applications for less than \$150 (\$75 matching funds) will be approved.

12. Expenditures made between **October 1, 2024, and June 1, 2026**, will qualify. **Projects must be completed by June 30, 2026. All requests for reimbursement must be submitted and postmarked by July 1, 2026.**

All applications for funds must be made on the enclosed form titled USFS Federal Financial Assistance - Volunteer Fire Assistance (VFA) Application 2025.

Applications and IRS W-9 Forms are also available at: www.iowadnr.gov/fire

Iowa Wildland Fire Reporting Forms

Iowa Wildland Fire Reporting Forms can be submitted via the [Iowa DNR Wildland Fire Reporting Google Form](http://www.iowadnr.gov/fire), found at www.iowadnr.gov/fire under **Fire Protection & Prevention**. These reports are needed on any and all uncontrolled wildland area fires you respond to, and any prescribed or controlled wildland burns you assist with. "Wildland" is considered to be grass, pasture, field (corn, beans etc.), ditch, or timber. Without your assistance in reporting these fire events, our ability to support the fire service community with federal funds, training opportunities, valuable equipment and community awareness campaigns is terribly handicapped.

Sincerely,
Jason Walker



DNR Forestry - Fire Program Supervisor
Enclosures

Send Completed Application Form and IRS W-9 Form by mail or email to:

DNR Forestry - Fire Program
2404 S Duff Ave
Ames IA 50010-8093
fire-program@dnr.iowa.gov

APPLICATION DEADLINE: OCTOBER 31, 2025



USFS FEDERAL FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Provided through the VOLUNTEER FIRE ASSISTANCE (VFA) PROGRAM COOPERATIVE FORESTRY ASSISTANCE ACT OF 1978. Distributed through agreement with the State Forester of the Iowa DNR Forestry.

Volunteer Fire Assistance (VFA) APPLICATION -Application Deadline: **OCTOBER 31, 2025**

2025

1. **FED TAX ID#:** _____ **DUNS #:** _____
Name of City/Township of Agency: _____
Name of Fire Department: _____
Mailing Address: _____
City: _____ State: Iowa Zip: _____
2. **Estimated TOTAL project cost:** _____
3. **Date of Application (MM/DD/YYYY):** _____ **County:** _____
4. Is the requesting community under 10,000 population? ☐ Yes ☐ No
5. Is the local 50% cost share available? ☐ Yes ☐ No
6. How many acres of state owned land are you protecting? _____ acres
7. Is the local agency registered with the State Fire Marshall's office? ☐ Yes ☐ No
8. Has the local agency provided Iowa Wildland Fire Reports during 2024/25? ☐ Yes ☐ No
9. Has the local agency participated in Wildland Fire training? ☐ Yes ☐ No
10. Does the local agency use wildland fire PPE on wildland fires? ☐ Yes ☐ No
11. Is the completed W-9 Federal Tax ID form attached? ☐ Yes ☐ No
12. Please list the communities that this department has Mutual Aid agreements with:

The applicant certifies, as a condition of this grant application, that no one within their organization will engage in the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession or use of a controlled substance in conducting any activity with this grant.

The applicant further certifies that to the best of his/her knowledge and belief, the information in this application is true and correct and that he/she will comply with the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978 and its administration guidelines if the grant is received.

Head of Local Government:

(or Financial Officer)

Signature: _____

Name (please print): _____

Title: _____

Day and Evening Phone: _____

Email Address: _____

Fire Chief:

Signature: _____

Name (please print): _____

Day and Evening Phone: _____

Email Address: _____

Volunteer Fire Assistance Program FY2025

All INVOICES must be dated between October 1, 2024 and June 1, 2026.

All BILLING CLAIMS must be received by July 1, 2026.

Eligible Cost-Share Items	Quantity	Unit Cost	Total
\$4,500 maximum VFA cost-share			
Wildfire Hand and Line Tools			
5 gal. Backpack Bladder Bags	_____	_____	
Fire Rake, Collapsible Fire Rake	_____	_____	
Fire Swatter, Fire Broom	_____	_____	
Shovel, McLeod, Pulaski Tool	_____	_____	
Chain Saws, Leaf Blowers, Mist Blowers	_____	_____	
Fire Weather Kit, Kestrel Weather Meters	_____	_____	
Fuses, Drip Torch	_____	_____	
GPS Units	_____	_____	
Wildland Fire Protective Clothing			
Shirts, Pants, Coveralls, Brush Coats: Nomex	_____	_____	
Neck Shrouds: Nomex	_____	_____	
Goggles: fire safe	_____	_____	
Gloves: fire safe	_____	_____	
Hardhats: fire safe	_____	_____	
Fire Packs, Radio Harness, Web Gear	_____	_____	
Fire Shelters	_____	_____	
Communications Equipment			
Base Radios	_____	_____	
Handheld/Programmable Radios	_____	_____	
Mobile Radios	_____	_____	
Pagers	_____	_____	
Wildland Water Handling Equipment			
Slide-In Units	_____	_____	
Foam Units, Foam Mixers and/or Foam	_____	_____	
Portable Tanks	_____	_____	
Portable Pumps	_____	_____	
Hoses (¾", 1", 1 ½")	_____	_____	
Nozzles and Fittings	_____	_____	
Special Request (no buildings, vehicles, trailers, or ATV's)			
How does your Special Request apply to Wildland Fire?			
(Attach a separate sheet for special requests)			
	Estimated Total Project Cost:		

NO INDIVIDUAL ITEM CAN BE \$5,000 OR MORE.

Return Completed Application via
mail or email by October 31, 2025

Iowa DNR Fire Program
2404 S Duff Ave
Ames IA 50010-8093

Fire Supervisor Phone: 515-233-1161
Fire-Program@dnr.iowa.gov

Iowa DNR Forestry - Fire Program Opportunities

The DNR Forestry - Fire Program, in cooperation with the USDA Forest Service, State, Private and Tribal Forestry and other federal, state and local partners, work to provide assistance to the rural volunteer fire departments through a variety of programs and activities in an effort to provide quality fire protection to the state's natural resources.

Programs:

State Fire Assistance (SFA) - Works to protect natural resources from fire on state and private lands through: fire prevention, suppression and fuels management education; training and outreach opportunities.

- **Wildland Fire Prevention Educational and Program Materials:** The DNR Forestry - Fire Program is Iowa's source of Smokey Bear materials. Smokey Bear costumes are available for loan. We offer a wide range of Smokey Bear promotional items appropriate for Wildfire Prevention Program audiences of all ages. (Examples of items available: coloring pages, activity books, rulers, balloons, stickers, tattoos, posters, pencils, label pins, etc.) For assistance, contact naomi.splinter@dnr.iowa.gov.
- **Wildland Fire and Prescribed Fire Training:** The DNR Forestry - Fire Program staff work to provide wildland fire and prescribed fire training to Natural Resource Managers and Volunteer Fire Department personnel. The following 8-hour courses are available:
 - DNR - ATV/UTV - Fire Operations & Tactics
 - DNR - VFD Wildland Fire Operations
 - DNR - VFD Wildland Fire Engine Operations & Tactics
 - DNR - Prescribed FireFor additional information, email fire-program@dnr.iowa.gov.
- **Wildland-Urban Interface Fire Prevention and Awareness:** The DNR Forestry - Fire Program, the US Forest Service and a wide range of other federal, state, and local partners are working to encourage homeowners and communities to be proactive in identifying and mitigating situations that may prevent effective fire protection in the rural and wildland-urban interface locations.

Volunteer Fire Assistance (VFA) - Improves the capability of Iowa's rural volunteer fire departments to protect lives, structures, and natural resources in rural and wildland/urban interface areas.

VFA Grants work to offset the costs of wildland fire equipment and personal safety gear to existing fire departments and to support the organization of new fire departments in unprotected communities (Grants are 50-50 cost-share; maximum allocation per department is \$4,500/year). Grant applications are available at www.iowadnr.gov/fire.

Federal Excess Personal Property (FEPP) - Federal excess property is acquired on behalf of the US Forest Service and loaned to state forestry agencies and their cooperators (volunteer fire departments) for their use in providing wildland and rural community fire protection. To obtain available equipment, Fire Departments must enter into a formal Cooperative Agreement with the DNR Forestry - Fire Program and the USFS.

Once fire departments obtain the equipment, they are expected to paint it and modify it to best fit their needs, in accordance with the agreement and safety guidelines. Fire departments bear the cost of transportation, conversion, painting, storage and maintenance. The equipment usually requires some conversion, but the cost is much less than the purchase of comparable equipment.

Fire Departments are responsible for making conversions in a safe and timely manner; protecting the equipment from theft, vandalism, and weather; painting vehicles in fire service colors; maintaining appropriate liability

insurance and returning the equipment, less any added equipment, to the DNR Forestry - Fire Program when no longer needed.

Department of Defense - Firefighter Property (DOD-FFP) - This program is similar to the FEPP program, with the exception that generally, once the equipment is modified, ready to put into service and inspected by a DNR Forestry - Fire staff, title is transferred to the Fire Department. The departments are asked to retain ownership for a minimum of five years.

Screening Instructions are provided to Fire Department contacts upon request. Requests for potential pieces of equipment can be made via phone, messaging or e-mail. Property screening is dependent upon items requested and availability. When requesting screening assistance, please provide as much detail as possible along with contact person and telephone number(s), mailing address and e-mail address.

Contacts	Jason Walker – Fire Supervisor	cell: 515-689-0083 email: jason.walker@dnr.iowa.gov
	Karl Harris – Cooperative Fire Specialist	cell: 515-490-8296 email: karl.harris@dnr.iowa.gov
	DNR Forestry - Fire Program 2404 S Duff Ave Ames IA 50010	email: fire-program@dnr.iowa.gov