

# Tips for Rural Fire Department Assistance in California

## 1. Form a local fire department assistance committee

Create a contact list with your local fire protection partners including federal and state agencies, other fire departments, local government, and fire safe council members. Form your local fire assistance committee which may be subgroup of your fire safe council. Committee members should participate, at various levels, to assess local fire protection needs and option to address these issues. See links to assist you in finding contacts for your committee:

- Local Fire Safe Councils in California: <http://www.firesafecouncil.org/councils/home.cfm>
- Bureau of Land Management, California Field Offices: <http://www.ca.blm.gov/fieldoffices.html>
- CDF Units: [http://www.fire.ca.gov/FireEmergencyResponse/FirePlan/units\\_countyfireplan.asp](http://www.fire.ca.gov/FireEmergencyResponse/FirePlan/units_countyfireplan.asp)
- US Forest Service, California National Forests: <http://ceres.ca.gov/ceres/calweb/nfs.html>
- National Parks: <http://www.nps.gov/parks.html>
- Tribal Groups in California: <http://www.kstrom.net/isk/maps/ca/california.html>
- National Wildlife Refuges: <http://refuges.fws.gov/refugeLocatorMaps/california.html>
- California Fire Alliance: <http://www.cafirealliance.org/>
- Volunteer Fire Departments: <http://www.volunteerfd.org/>
- US Fire Administration Points of Contact: [http://www.usfa.fema.gov/fire-service/pocs/poc\\_ca.shtm](http://www.usfa.fema.gov/fire-service/pocs/poc_ca.shtm)

## 2. Asses your department needs

Determine what qualifications or standards in equipment and training are needed to function effectively in your community. You will need information about your current level of qualifications as well as future training needs for the department. Gather information about the quality and standards of your current and needed firefighting equipment and supplies. Asses existing training options in your area such as local agency annual training programs, agency training centers (OES, CDF, USFS) and community college wildland fire programs. See links to training organizations, centers and programs.

- National Fire Academy: <http://www.usfa.fema.gov/fire-service/nfa/nfa.shtm>
- National Volunteer Fire Council: <http://www.nvfc.org/training.html>
- California Wildland Fire Training: <http://www.nationalfiretraining.net/ca/catrain/>
- California Fire Chiefs Association: <http://calchiefs.org/index.cfm>
- Firescope: <http://www.firescope.org/>

## 3. Develop cost estimates for your training and equipment needs

Determine or estimate the costs of the training, equipment, supplies and prevention activities that you are requesting assistance with. Costs for prevention and mitigation activities may include your staff/ volunteer time. Costs can be estimated with assistance from your agency contact or agreement specialist or by following standard wage estimates for particular positions.

## 4. Determine the agency grant requirements and asses how you will comply

Review the applicable guidance and requirements for the grant or assistance that you are considering. Things to consider: Individual program matching requirements- Rural Fire Assistance Program has a 10 percent match, Volunteer Fire Assistance Program has a 50 percent match; Other federal funding sources cannot be used as a match to federal grants; Matching can include in-kind costs and services (staff time, building use, etc).

- Government grant requirements OMB Circulars A-102 C.§\_\_.24 or A-110 C.§\_\_.23: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars/index.html>
- Fundraising ideas: [http://www.action-training.com/raising\\_matching\\_funds.asp](http://www.action-training.com/raising_matching_funds.asp)
- Grants and Related Resources: <http://www.lib.msu.edu/harris23/grants/znprofrg.htm>
- California Fire Safe Council Grant Clearinghouse: <http://grants.firesafecouncil.org/>
- Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance: <http://12.46.245.173/cfda/cfda.html>
- Grants.gov: <http://www.grants.gov/>
- US Fire Administration Grants: <http://www.usfa.fema.gov/fire-service/grants/>
- Rural Fire Assistance Program: [http://www.fireplan.gov/community/rural\\_fire\\_assist.html](http://www.fireplan.gov/community/rural_fire_assist.html)
- State Fire Assistance: [http://www.fireplan.gov/community/state\\_fire\\_assist.html](http://www.fireplan.gov/community/state_fire_assist.html)
- Volunteer Fire Assistance: [http://www.fireplan.gov/community/volunteer\\_fire\\_assist.html](http://www.fireplan.gov/community/volunteer_fire_assist.html)

## 5. Gather supporting information and statistics

There may be more options available to you than just grant funding. Strategic options may be developed by assessing your fire suppression, mitigation (fuel treatments and firewise activities) and prevention (signage and outreach) needs within the community. Much of this information may already exist in a Community Fire Protection Plan, CDF-Unit Plan or Agency Fire Management Plan.

Many agencies prioritize grant funding based on the following subjects: communities-at-risk: conditions class and fire regime; fire hazard severity zone; historical fire occurrences; Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) status (intermix of homes to vegetation); demographic trends; fire department ISO evaluation, and; fire statistics such as the number of times a department responds to WUI fires, number of assists to a Department of the Interior agency (BLM, NPS, FWS, BIA), Forest Service or CDF fire, and the number of communities at risk protected by the fire department. See the following web links for related information:

- National Fire Plan Information: <http://www.fireplan.gov/>
- Community Wildfire Protection Plan Template: <http://www.safnet.org/policyandpress/cwpphandbook.pdf>
- DOI Risk Assessments and Mitigation Strategies (RAMS): [http://www.nifc.blm.gov/nsdu/fire\\_planning/rams/](http://www.nifc.blm.gov/nsdu/fire_planning/rams/)
- California Fire Planning and Mapping Tools: [http://wildfire.cr.usgs.gov/fire\\_planning/viewer.htm](http://wildfire.cr.usgs.gov/fire_planning/viewer.htm)
- CDF Fire Hazard Severity Zones: <http://frap.cdf.ca.gov/data/frapgismaps/select.asp>
- California Fire Plan Template: [http://frap.cdf.ca.gov/fire\\_plan/](http://frap.cdf.ca.gov/fire_plan/)
- California Department of Forestry and Fire (CDF- Unit) Fire Plans: [http://www.fire.ca.gov/FireEmergencyResponse/FirePlan/units\\_countyfireplan.asp](http://www.fire.ca.gov/FireEmergencyResponse/FirePlan/units_countyfireplan.asp)
- ISO Mitigation Online: <http://www.isomitigation.com/fire2.html>
- National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS): <http://www.nfirs.fema.gov/>
- Federal Definitions of Fire Regime and Condition Class: <http://fire.org/frcc/FrccDefinitionsFinal.pdf>
- California Congressional Districts: <http://calvoter.org/voter/maps/index.html>
- California Communities at risk (reference pages 43387-43391): <http://www.fireplan.gov/reports/351-358-en.pdf>
- Latitude and Longitude of Department of project: <http://www.topozone.com/>