

**DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND
SECURITY
Office for Domestic Preparedness**

**2004 Guidance for the
Fire Prevention and Safety Grants**

This document provides a summary of the Office for Domestic Preparedness 2004 Fire Prevention and Safety Grants. It explains how to apply, what items can be requested, and how applications will be evaluated. Please read this guidance carefully. The Notice of Funds Availability and answers to “Frequently Asked Questions” should also be reviewed when made available on the www.firegrantsupport.com website. Together, these documents provide you with the information you need to complete the online application. The online application will be available at <https://portal.fema.gov/> from September 1, until September 30, 2004.

Prepared by the Assistance to Firefighters Grant, Fire Prevention and Safety Office

2004 FIRE PREVENTION AND SAFETY GRANTS GUIDANCE

The purpose of these grants is to assist State, regional, national or local organizations to address fire prevention and safety. Our primary goal is to reach high-risk target groups including children, seniors and firefighters. Under our authorizing statute the emphasis for these grants is the prevention of fire related injuries to children.

The authority for these grants is the Federal Fire Protection and Control Act of 1974 (15 U.S.C. §§ 2201 et seq.), as amended. In fiscal year (FY) 2004, Congress appropriated a total of \$745,125,000 to carry out the activities of the Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program. This appropriation included a mandate that no less than five percent of the appropriated funds support fire prevention activities. As such, \$27,500,000 of the total appropriation has been reserved for the Fire Prevention and Safety grants. The award of competitive fire prevention grants to fire departments will achieve the remaining amount of funds needed to reach the statutory minimum.

Eligible Applicants

We are authorized to award grants to national, regional, State, local, or community organizations (including fire departments) that are recognized for their experience and expertise in fire prevention or safety programs and activities. Private non-profit and public organizations are eligible to apply for funding for these grants.

Fire departments that have received or applied for training, equipment, vehicles, etc. under the FY 2004 Assistance to Firefighter Grant Program are eligible to apply for the fire prevention grants in this application period. However, funding to any organization is limited to a \$750,000 Federal share per program year. If a fire department received funding through the FY 2004 Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program, the total of that award plus the FY 2004 Fire Prevention grant cannot exceed \$750,000.

Application Process

The online application will be accessible from the following Internet website:

<https://portal.fema.gov>

We have designed the automated application with many built-in “help screens” and “drop-down menus” to assist applicants throughout the application process. Another positive feature of the automated system is that it will not allow an incomplete application to be submitted, (i.e., the system will alert you if you have not provided required information). Also, by submitting an application online, you will be automatically notified via e-mail that your application has been received. Applicants may access, amend, and save their application as often as necessary during the open

application period until they submit their application or the application period closes. ***Once submitted, applications cannot be changed.***

The online system will allow one authorized representative of an eligible organization to log in and create a user name and password for the organization. The selection of the authorized representative is at the discretion of each organization. **If you have a user name and password from the Assistance to Firefighters grant program or have been awarded an FY 2002 or FY 2003 Fire Prevention and Safety Grant, you must use that user name and password information. Failure to use your existing user name and password may delay the processing of your application.** The information requested on the automated application replicates the information requested on standard “paper” Federal grant forms. The application includes general questions about the applicant’s organization and constituency, as well as questions that create an outline and budget details for each proposed project.

The online application will allow for multiple projects to be outlined separately. Thus, while only one application may be submitted, applicants may choose to apply for several different projects. Be advised that your application should only include projects/activities that will be completed within the one-year grant period.

Paper applications will be accepted, but are discouraged. We are discouraging paper applications because of the inherent delays associated with processing them. Additionally, these applications do not have the built-in help that is available to the online applicants. Finally, there is no built-in assurance that paper applications are complete when submitted.

Applicants that wish to apply via paper application can download the forms from or obtain them via mail by calling our helpdesk at 1-866-274-0960. Paper applications must include the following completed forms: FF#20-16 Assurances and Certifications; FF#20-20 Budget Information—Non- Construction Programs; and SF#424 Request for Federal Assistance. ***Paper application forms will not be sent to prospective applicants via overnight delivery, by fax or email.***

The application period for the FY 2004 program will begin on or about September 1, 2004. Completed applications must be submitted electronically or postmarked on or before the close of business (5:00 p.m. EST) on September 30, 2004. We will issue a confirmation page to the applicant when an electronic application is successfully completed and submitted. We will not issue receipt confirmations for paper applications. We recommend printing this confirmation page along with the user name and password created through the online system and maintaining this page as a reference file.

Applications submitted by mail must be postmarked no later than September 30, 2004. Applications **not** submitted electronically must be mailed to DHS/ODP Fire Grant Program Office, 810 7th St, NW, Suite 640, Washington, DC 20531. **No late, incomplete, or faxed applications will be accepted.** No electronically submitted applications, other than those submitted online via the automated grant application

system, will be accepted (i.e., we will not accept applications submitted via email). We will **not** be responsible for applications mailed to any address other than the one listed above. Information containing the target audience size and budget details must be included in the application in order for a paper application to be deemed a complete application.

A written narrative is required for both online and paper applications. The narrative portion of your application should provide the details of the project(s) you are proposing, including a detailed description of the budget needed to support each project. The narrative should also relate the proposed project(s) to the funding priorities outlined in the Notice of Funds Availability and this guidance. Minimally, the narrative should focus on the benefits the constituency or target audience will gain from the expenditure of the grant funds and what methodology was used to determine the need for the project.

Space for the narrative is limited; the narrative for the application **cannot** exceed ten pages. Please note the system will “time-out” on each screen if no “save” activity is detected. When you are entering information into a narrative box, the system does **not** recognize this as a “save” activity. Be sure to click the “save” button periodically to ensure information has been recorded. We recommend that the narrative be typed off-line on any word processing software, such as Word, Word Perfect, Notepad, etc., to avoid losing any work. Once your narrative is complete, you can copy it or “cut-and-paste” it from your word processing source onto the narrative block in the application. Any supporting documents that exceed ten pages will not be included in the review process.

As of October 1, 2003, all Federal agencies are required to request the Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number of each applicant applying for Federal grants. The DUNS number is a unique nine-character identification number provided by the commercial company Dun & Bradstreet. There is no charge to obtain a DUNS number. We encourage obtaining a DUNS number prior to the application period as it may take up to 14 business days to obtain the number online www.dnb.com/US/duns_update/index.html. Applicants can also call **1-800-333-0505** to register for a number immediately. If you have already obtained a DUNS number for this program or any other Federal program, you will use the same number.

Eligible Activities

We encourage applicants to develop projects that address an identified fire prevention need. We also encourage applicants to develop innovative projects that have a reasonable potential to be effective.

We believe there is a greater benefit to funding projects that have been based on a risk assessment; therefore those applications that base their project scope on an assessment will receive the highest consideration. This assessment can be based on a formal or informal methodology, however the methodology should be discussed in the application. Formal assessments include those that use software programs or expert

analysis to assess risk trends. Informal assessments would include, for example, a manual study of fire loss, burn injuries, or life loss over a period of time, and the causative factors for each occurrence. Applications that are based on an informal assessment and are seeking financial assistance for a formal assessment under the fire prevention and safety grant will also receive consideration. Applications that are not based on an assessment, are not requesting funding for an assessment, or do not describe a completed assessment in their application will receive the lowest consideration. With respect to risk assessments, eligible costs include outsourcing the risk assessment, and obtaining tools or other costs to conduct the assessment.

The following are examples of projects that we believe have a high importance. This list is **not** an all-inclusive list of projects that will be considered. These projects are **not** listed in order of importance:

- Projects that promote distributing and installing smoke alarms and checking to assure previously installed smoke alarms are operational. Applicants should discuss the methodology employed in order to identify recipients (target audience) and the plan for ensuring that alarms are installed.
- Projects that promote planning for emergency egress for residential, commercial, or institutional occupancies and practicing escape routes, or conducting home fire safety surveys.
- Fire prevention programs targeting high-risk audiences, including those that:
 - i. Enhance national, regional, State, or local efforts to reduce fires and burn injuries affecting children under the age of 14 or adults over 65.
 - ii. Target geographical areas with a higher incidence of fire related deaths, injuries, and property loss; *and*
 - iii. Implement projects that mitigate fire related risks in urban, suburban or rural areas to include addressing culturally sensitive materials or social economic challenges.
- Projects that affect the entire community such as educating the public about residential sprinklers, promoting residential sprinklers, and demonstrating working models of residential sprinklers.
- Projects that promote the adoption or awareness of building codes and enforcement, improve engineering, or enact fire-related ordinances for new construction.
- Projects that develop and implement national prevention initiatives, focused on the three target groups mentioned above.

- Local or regional projects to educate or train personnel in the area of public education, code enforcement and arson prevention.
- Fire safety education props (trailers, mobile robots, and puppets) in conjunction with a definitive and comprehensive public safety education campaign. The campaign's plan must include specific goals with measured results. Examples include reducing fire related injuries and deaths in the targeted population groups based on specific findings from a risk assessment. Applicants should include information relating to the number of outreach efforts that will be conducted and/or the number of people reached through the proposed campaign.
- Wildfire Prevention Programs. Education and awareness programs that protect lives, property and natural resources from fire in wildland/urban interfaces including educational materials and personnel costs. Fuel reduction projects are **not eligible**. However, a project that uses a fuel reduction demonstration as part of an awareness and education effort can be considered.
- Arson Prevention Programs. Arson investigation trailers, equipment and costs related to arson investigator training, arson related surveillance equipment, personnel costs, educational materials and media equipment, as well as, juvenile fire setter intervention programs are eligible costs.
- Fire suppression equipment, supplies, vehicles, firefighting training, personal protective gear or wellness and fitness projects are **not eligible** for the fire prevention and safety grants.

Funding Priorities and Evaluation Criteria

For the purposes of funding priorities under the Fire Prevention and Safety Grant Program, we believe that the greatest benefit will be achieved through proposals that target children under the age of 14, adults 65 years and older, firefighters or a high-risk audience identified through a risk assessment. Consideration will also be given to projects that target other identified high-risk populations.

Proposed projects that **do not** reflect the characteristics outlined below will receive very low consideration. The characteristics listed below will be used in making funding decisions. Applications that clearly discuss the following characteristics of the project(s) in their narrative will improve their opportunity to receive favorable consideration.

- Project(s) should be based on sound reasoning regarding the determination of the target audience, measurable goals and project evaluation. This includes basing the project on a formal or informal risk assessment.

- The use of collaborative partnerships that are established with public or private groups/agencies whose mission serves the population identified by the project. We believe that proposals that incorporate partnerships between groups and agencies whose mission serves the target group of the project will lead to a greater longevity and success of the project. Therefore, projects that include such partnerships and commitments will be afforded higher consideration.
- Demonstrate in the narrative a high benefit for the cost incurred and maximize the level of funding that goes directly into the delivery of the project. The costs associated with the project must also be reasonable for the target audience that will be reached.
- Propose a program that will be sustained beyond the grant performance period and has a greater potential for long-term benefits.
- Applicants that illustrate in their narrative the need for Federal financial assistance.
- Applicants that demonstrate that there is a financial need for grant assistance or is an organization that would provide an exceptional opportunity for collaboration and market penetration.
- Applicants that demonstrate a proven track record for timely project completion and performance in similar projects.

Other Eligible Costs

(1) **Administrative Costs:** Administrative costs are allowable under any of the program areas listed above, in accordance with OMB Circular A-87 or OMB Circular A-122, as applicable. (For more information about the Circulars, go to www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars). Applicants may apply for administrative costs if the costs are directly related to the implementation of the program for which they are applying. Administrative costs are identifiable costs directly associated with the implementation and management of the grant. If requesting administrative expenses, list the costs under the “other” category in the budget and explain the costs in the project narrative. The administrative costs should be based on actual expenses, and not a percentage of the overall grant. DHS will reimburse actual expenses only. Examples of eligible administrative costs would be shipping, office supplies, computers associated with the NFIRS reporting requirements (see Grantee’s Responsibilities, below), etc. The cost of a grant writer (if specifically listed on your application), is eligible and can be charged to the grant as an administrative cost in accordance with the provisions outlined below (see (7) below). We will assess the reasonableness of the administrative costs requested in each application and determine if it is appropriate and in the best interest of the program.

(2) **Indirect Costs:** If applicants have an approved indirect cost rate, they may charge indirect costs to the grant. If applicants are charging indirect costs to the grant, they must submit documentation that supports the indirect cost rate to FEMA's Financial and Acquisition Management Division for review and approval prior to submitting any claims for indirect costs. The appropriate documentation for an approved indirect rate is a negotiated indirect cost agreement. The indirect rate is applicable as long as it is consistent with the established terms of the agreement. For example, some indirect cost rates may not apply to capital procurements; in these cases, indirect cost rates would not apply for a grant for equipment.

(3) **Audit Costs:** Some grantees with large awards may be required to undergo an audit in accordance with OMB Circular A-133. Specifically, recipients of Federal funding that spend in excess of \$500,000 of Federal funds in a year must undergo an audit. (For more information about the Circular, go to www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars). The costs incurred for such an audit would be an eligible expenditure if included in the proposal's budget. Applicants may wish to consider including anticipated costs of such an audit if applying for a significant level of funding. DHS does not require any other type of audit; therefore no other audit costs are eligible.

(4) **Renovation Costs:** Renovations to an existing facility are allowable only if the costs comply with the final rule as published in the Federal Register (i.e., limited to minor interior alterations costing less than \$10,000). In order to be eligible, renovations must be essential to the successful completion of the grant scope of work. Environmental and historic preservation requirements may also apply to grants involving renovation activities. Construction costs are not eligible under the Fire Prevention and Safety Grant Program. Construction includes major alterations to a building that changes the profile or footprint of the structure. Note: Installation of fire suppression, fire alarms or detection systems are not considered renovations and accordingly not subject to the limits outlined for renovation costs. The costs however need to be reasonable and justified. Fire departments who are considering installation of suppression, fire alarm or detection systems in a fire department facility are encouraged to apply under the Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program under Modification to Facilities.

(5) **Transportation Costs:** Tow vehicles or other means of transport may be eligible as a transportation expense if adequately justified in the proposal. Transportation expenses are limited to \$6,000 per application.

(6) **Pre-award Costs:** Generally, grantees cannot use grant funds to pay for products and services contracted for, or purchased prior to the effective date of the grant. However, expenses incurred after the application deadline but prior to award may be eligible for reimbursement if the expenses were justified, unavoidable, consistent with the grant's scope of work, and specifically approved by DHS. DHS will consider requests for reimbursement for pre-award costs on a case-by-case basis.

(7) **Pre-application Costs:** Expenses, obligations, commitments or contracts incurred or entered into prior to the application deadline are *not* eligible to be included as a grant expense with the exception of grant preparation costs (see (7) below).

(8) **Grant Writer Fees:** Fees for grant writers may be included as a pre-award or pre-application expenditure (as provided in section 152.7(b) of the Assistance to Firefighters Grant Final Rule). However, fees payable on a contingency basis are not an eligible expense that can be charged to the grant. For grant writers' fees to be eligible as a pre-award expenditure, the fees must be specifically identified and listed in the application. In order to be eligible, the fees must also be paid prior to award, (i.e., paid within 60 days of the end of the application period). Applicants may be required to provide documentation to support these pre-award expenditures. The hiring of a grant writer or use of any other third parties in the preparation of the application does not eliminate the applicant's responsibilities for assuring that the information contained in the application is true and correct.

(9) **Personnel Costs:** Due to the maintenance of expenditure requirement, personnel costs are eligible as long as the personnel costs are "new" to the grantee. What we mean by "new" is that the costs would not be incurred if it not for the grant. For example, in a fire prevention program, the grantee might ask staff or firefighters to work overtime to deliver the program during off-duty hours. In this case, the overtime would not have been paid were it not for the fire prevention program. Another example might be hiring of a new staff person to deliver the program -- again, were it not for the fire prevention program, the grantee would not have incurred these new costs. We will not fund any existing positions, (i.e., current staff reassigned to the grant).

Award Procedure

A panel of reviewers will assess each application's merits with respect to the detail provided in the narrative on the activity including budget information and the rationale used to identify the project. Reviewers will also assess financial need and the purported benefit to be derived from the cost. The panel evaluators will independently score each application and if necessary, discuss the merits/shortcomings of the application to reconcile any major discrepancies. A consensus is not required.

The ranking will be summarized in a Technical Report prepared by the Grants Program Office. The Grants Program Office will make award recommendations to the FEMA Grants Management Branch of the Financial and Acquisition Management Division. The Grants Management Branch will contact the applicant to discuss and/or negotiate the content of the application before making the final award decision.

Grantees' Responsibilities

Recipients (Grantees) must agree to:

- (1) Share in the costs of the proposed activity, (i.e., agree to a matching cost-share of non-Federal funds). Generally, recipients must agree to match with an amount of non-Federal funds equal to 30 percent of the assistance received. However, the match for recipients that may be characterized as community organizations whose mission serves populations of less than 50,000 shall be 10 percent of the total project cost. DHS, in its discretion, will make this determination based upon the organization's primary target population as reflected in such things as its bylaws and mission statement. A copy of the mission or bylaws does not need to be submitted unless requested. For fire departments, DHS will look at the population of the department's primary response area. **The non-Federal match must be cash; "in-kind" contributions are not permitted.** Applicants do not need to have the match on hand when applying or when the grant is awarded. By accepting the grant, the applicant is committing to spending the cost share prior to the end of the grant period.
- (2) Maintain operating expenditures for the one-year grant period in the areas funded by this grant activity at a level equal to or greater than the average of their operating expenditures in the two years preceding the year in which this assistance is received. This program is meant to supplement rather than replace the applicants funding.
- (3) Retain grant files and supporting documentation for three years after the closeout of the grant.
- (4) Grantees are required to follow their own established procurement policies. This will help ensure that all procurement actions are conducted in a manner that provides, to the maximum extent possible, open and free competition. If the organization has no established procedures, at least two quotes/bids for procurement must be obtained. Documentation of the process used must be maintained in a grant file for the period of three years.
- (5) Report applicant performance progress made on your grant after six months. At grant closeout, applicants need to report how the grant funding was used and the benefits realized from the award in a final report. An accounting of the funds should also be included.
- (6) Make grant files, books and records available if requested for DHS's inspection to ensure compliance with requirements of the grant program.
- (7) **If applicant is a fire department** they must agree to provide information, through established reporting channels to the U.S. Fire Administration's National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS) for the period covered by the assistance. If a fire department does not currently participate in the incident reporting system and does not have the capacity to report at the time of the award, that grantee must agree to provide information to the system for a twelve-month period commencing as soon as they develop the capacity to report.

(8) Follow the audit requirements of OMB Circular A-133, Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non-profit Organizations, which call for grantees who expend \$500,000 or more in Federal funds in the organizations' fiscal year (from all Federal sources) and perform a single audit. (For more information about the Circulars, go to www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars).