

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
AND CONSERVATION

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April 1, 2020

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Dear Fire Department Officer,

Ravalli County Commissioners

Rural Fire Capacity Grant Funds Available

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The Rural Fire Capacity Grant (RFC) Program assists volunteer rural fire departments by providing cost-share grants for training, equipping and organizing. The RFC grant program is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service. This federal funding is passed through and administered by the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC).

The RFC grant program application period for cost-share funds is now open. Completed applications must be received by May 17, 2020. The application may be found on the website: www.dnrc.mt.gov/grants-and-loans, select "Fire Grants". There is also the opportunity to apply online through a link on the website. Funding is conditional upon available allocations to this program.

THE FORMS AND APPLICATION HAVE BEEN UPDATED FOR 2020. PLEASE REVIEW THE NEW RURAL FIRE CAPACITY GUIDE BEFORE FILLING OUT YOUR APPLICATION.

Any fire department that is based in a community, with a population of 10,000 or less (latest Census), is eligible to apply for funding. All projects are to have wildfire emphasis. Single applications representing countywide fire organizations receive priority. Communications equipment should be capable of integrating with state and federal firefighting forces (P-25, analog and narrow-band). Any single item costing \$5,000 or more, construction or improvement of fire stations for housing equipment, normal operational expenses and maintenance do not qualify for RFC funding. Incomplete applications or those missing elements may not be considered.

Complete one Appendix A in detail for each individual department and list the eligible cost-share items for that department. At the top of each Appendix A, please write the name of the organization that corresponds to the appendix. For countywide projects (a project that benefits all departments within a county; i.e. repeater system), include one Appendix A and note that it covers all the departments listed in the main body of the application.

It is important to understand that the allocation of these funds from the USDA to DNRC and onto you, is based on fire occurrence reporting (more fires reported = more funding). We cannot understate the importance of reporting ALL wildland fires into your local DNRC office. Future RFC grant awards will be prioritized to those Fire Departments/Counties providing timely and quality fire reports to DNRC offices. The RFC grant has been an excellent resource for local fire organizations and we encourage your participation. These grants have certainly benefited all 56 counties within Montana.

More details are available by contacting your local DNRC office, by calling me at (406) 542-4267 or on the internet at www.dnrc.mt.gov/grants-and-loans. If access to the internet is not available, please call or email me at rheablankenship@mt.gov, to obtain an application package.



Rhea Blankenship
Rural Fire Capacity Program Officer
DNRC, Fire Protection Bureau
Forestry Division