

MISSISSIPPI EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

NEWS



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SUBJECT: Low Number Of Fire Grant Program Applications A Concern

Washington, April 18, 2001 -- As the **May 2, 2001** deadline approaches, the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the U.S. Fire Administration (USFA) today voiced concern over the low number of applications for the new Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program that have been received since the application period opened on April 2.

"We know interest is high in the new program," said Acting USFA Administrator Ken Burris. "While our grant office has received nearly 5,000 E-mails and more than 4,000 telephone calls, they have logged in less than 250 completed applications as of Friday of last week "

With more than 30,000 fire departments eligible to compete for a grant, Burris is concerned many will send in their paperwork at the very end of the application period. In fact, since the grant application forms were posted on the USFA web site, they have been downloaded individually or as a package more than 28,000 times.

"If we receive a huge batch of applications on May 2, it will be very difficult to process them all and still maintain our schedule of review panels in May and June," Burris said.

Fire departments in the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, or the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands are eligible to apply. *A fire department is defined as an agency that provides public fire prevention and control to local, municipal, district, county, parish, or tribal governments based on a formally recognized arrangement.*

The six categories for which grants will be awarded are: training, wellness/fitness, vehicles, firefighting equipment, personal protective equipment, and fire prevention programs.

The grant office is accepting completed applications (the original and two copies) until **5:00 pm EDT on May 2, 2001**, but is encouraging everyone to send in their packages as quickly as possible. Applications should be mailed to:

USFA Grant Program Technical Assistance Center
16825 South Seton Avenue
Emmitsburg, Maryland 21727-8898

More information on the grant program is available at www.usfa.fema.gov/grants, through the toll free information line **866-274-0960** or by sending e-mail to usfagrants@fema.gov.

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