

Plans address fire equipment replacement, budgeting, insurance, fire prevention programs and explanations of the duties, privileges and responsibilities of each Rural Fire District Board of Directors. The plan is presented at a joint meeting of local governing boards. Follow-up assistance from NFS is available upon request.



Mutual Aid Planning

Large fires and emergencies in a district often stress local resources and result in a need for help from neighboring fire districts. For this reason, NFS encourages fire departments to participate in Mutual Aid Associations.

Mutual Aid Districts are eligible to have Mutual Aid Resource Directories prepared with the help of NFS. These directories familiarize each district with the resources and problem areas of fire districts within their Mutual Aid District.

Publications

NFS provides a number of publications to Nebraska firefighters and fire officials. Most of these are available at no cost. Three are published on a regular basis with the others updated as necessary.

Newspaper and Newsletters (published regularly)

- Info News - Newsletter for rural fire district fire prevention officers
- Rural Firefighter - Quarterly newsletter sent to fire chiefs and Rural Fire Board officers
- Smokey Sez - Monthly column published in the Nebraska Smoke Eater and Nebraska Firefighter newspapers

Fire Department Administration

- Determining Fire Department Operating and Suppression Costs
- Fire Protection Master Planning
- Laws Pertaining to Nebraska Fire Departments
- Nebraska Mutual Finance Assistance Act
- Your Responsibility as a Rural Fire Board Director

Fire Prevention

- Building a Top Screen for a Burning Barrel
- Campers Need Fire Prevention Too!
- Country Living at Its Best
- Don't Let Fire Reap Its Harvest
- Electrical Fire Prevention on the Farm & Ranch
- Fire Prevention Calendar
- Fire Prevention on the Farm and Ranch
- Fireworks in the Country
- Hunters & Anglers Need Fire Prevention Too!
- It's the Little Things That Count
- Preventing Farm Equipment Fires
- Preventing Fire on Your Farm
- Your Christmas Tree

Wildfire Cause Determination

- Wildfire Cause Indicators

Wildfire Suppression

- Emergency Assistance for Wildfire Suppression
- Wildfire Behavior in Fine Fuels (Video)



Nebraska Forest Service

Wildland Fire Protection



Aerial Wildfire Suppression



Equipment, Cost Share & Planning



Wildfire Suppression Training

For more information about the services provided through the NFS Wildland Fire Protection Program, call (402) 472-2944.



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NFS Wildland Fire Protection Program

The Nebraska Forest Service (NFS) Wildland Fire Protection Program provides service to Nebraska's fire departments in six areas: fire prevention, wildfire suppression training, equipment, planning, aerial fire suppression and cost sharing.

Unlike some states, NFS does not have a fire suppression force. Therefore, a goal of NFS is to maximize the impact of Nebraska's existing (predominantly volunteer) force of local firefighters. Combined, Nebraska's 476 rural fire districts have more than 14,000 firefighters. These 476 rural fire districts are organized into a well-developed system of 55 mutual aid districts.

Fire Prevention

The greatest impact Nebraskans can have on fire protection is by preventing fires. To achieve this, NFS will assist local fire departments in establishing a year-round fire prevention program. These programs are the heart and soul of effective fire prevention and can be tailored to meet each community's needs.

Through NFS, Nebraska fire departments can purchase fire prevention materials at cost. NFS also has Smokey Bear costumes that may be borrowed for use at fire prevention events.



Wildfire Suppression Training

NFS provides training to rural fire districts in several ways. Classes based on current knowledge and nationally accepted standards are offered upon request in communities across the state.

NFS also provides materials and funding to the Nebraska State Fire Marshal's firefighting training curriculum, assists with the annual Nebraska State Fire School and is actively involved with many local, state and regional fire training efforts.

Equipment

Through the Federal Excess Personal Property Program (FEPP), NFS, in cooperation with the U.S. Forest Service, is able to acquire vehicles which are no longer needed by the federal government. These vehicles are reconditioned and loaned to cooperating rural fire districts. The vehicles remain federal property and are returned to NFS when no longer needed. They are then either reassigned or sold, with the proceeds being returned to the federal treasury.

The NFS Fire Shop, located at the University of Nebraska Field Lab south of Mead, reconditions and maintains these vehicles and provides parts to qualifying fire districts. For more information about the FEPP Program, or to check equipment availability, call the NFS Fire Shop at (402) 624-8061.

Cost-Share Programs

Firefighting Equipment

The Volunteer Fire Assistance (VFA) Program allows the NFS to cost share with Nebraska fire districts up to 50 percent of the cost of fire-fighting equipment, such as protective clothing, communications equipment, fire prevention items, slip-in units, pumps, hose, nozzles, folding tanks and SCBA.

Items such as fire trucks, fire stations and town sirens do not qualify for this program. The program is announced each January and applications are mailed to each Nebraska fire chief.

Fuel Treatment

NFS also administers several cost-share programs designed to reduce the risk of catastrophic fire in our coniferous forests. Through these programs, eligible landowners can receive funds to offset a portion of the cost of thinning forest land. For more information about NFS cost-share programs, contact one of the NFS district offices nearest you: (402) 472-6629-Lincoln; (308) 728-3221-Ord; (402) 376-3241-Valentine; or (308) 432-3179 or (308) 432-6190-Chadron.



Aerial Wildfire Suppression

Currently, 35 aerial applicators (crop dusters) cooperate with NFS by making their aircraft available for fire fighting through the Aerial Wildfire Suppression Program. Under this program, Class A wildland foam fire retardant is stored statewide for wildfire suppression use by aerial applicators.

Training for aerial applicators is offered by the Nebraska Fire Marshal's Training Division. Other cooperating agencies include the Nebraska Department of Aeronautics, Nebraska State Patrol and Nebraska Emergency Management Agency.

More information about this program can be found in the NFS publication *Emergency Assistance for Wildfire Control*.

Planning

NFS can help both rural fire and mutual aid districts develop Fire Protection Master Plans and Mutual Aid Resource Directories.

Fire Protection Master Plan

The first step in developing a Fire Protection Master Plan is to conduct a comprehensive study of a community's fire protection capabilities, with input from local officials. These results are used to develop a report that meets a community's fire protection needs, based on recognized fire protection standards established by the insurance industry and the National Fire Protection Association.

