

Applicant Information Sheet – 50% Cost Share

Fire Hazard and Fuels Reduction Program

South Dakota Wildland Fire Suppression Division

The objective of the Wildland Urban Interface Fire Hazard and Fuels Reduction Cost-Share Program is to diminish the risk of catastrophic fire on private property by conducting fuels treatments in areas that are determined to be a high risk to adjacent homes or interface areas. A non-targeted ancillary benefit of this program is improved in forest health.

This program is intended to create or enhance survivable space around homes. Treatments will be no larger in acreage than that area that is deemed necessary for survivable space. The International Wildland Urban Interface Code and National Fire Protection Association Code 1144 will be followed for specific parameters. Treatment areas will not exceed 6.5 acres, or 300 feet around structures.

Projects that may be cost-shared are:

- Thinning dense stands of trees
- Firebreaks and fuel-breaks
- Thinning of forest stands and removal of volatile fuels
- Prescribed burning

This program is not intended for the following:

- Removal of select trees due to various forms of tree mortality
- Removal of slash piles, chip piles, and cut & chunk material that has been left as a result of previous treatments, unless posing an immediate threat to the home
- Large-scale thinning or fuels reduction treatments, unless specifically targeted as a necessary mitigation effort for a high-risk interface area
- Any treatment that does not meet the objectives of this program for creating or enhancing survivable-space around a home

Qualification of a property for the program will be at the discretion of the Wildland Interface Specialist.

Application Process: Landowners must first request an initial property visit to determine qualification for cost-share. Once a property owner has been given approval to proceed with the application process, the following application steps will be taken:

1. Landowner submits a signed Request for Cost-Share Assistance form;
2. The Landowner must agree to the terms of the fuels reduction prescription written by the South Dakota Wildland Fire Suppression Division;
3. Landowner must submit at least 3 bids from contractors. The bids must meet the terms of the prescription. If the landowner chooses to perform the work themselves, they may submit an additional bid for their own labor and materials as described on the following page. Only the lowest bid will be accepted, as long as the work estimate is consistent with the terms of the prescription;
 - Landowners are encouraged to get as many bids as possible. *In instances where a landowner claims inability to obtain 3 bids, they will provide documented dates and names of contractors contacted.*
4. At such time that the project is signed for approval by the designated staff of the South Dakota Wildland Fire Suppression Division, the landowner will be informed that work may commence;
5. The landowner is responsible for all work performed on the property, location of property lines, and for the project being done to the standards of the prescription. The landowner will also track all costs for later

(Over)

submittal at project completion. Further landowner responsibilities are described below under the "Liability Statement";

6. When the landowner feels that the project is complete, he/she will contact the Wildland Fire Suppression Division for a final inspection and the landowner shall submit a signed Certification of Project Completion form, and a W-9 form (Request for Taxpayer Identification Number and Certification);
7. Copies of invoices and proof of payment for contractual services will be submitted. Detailed explanations of out-of-pocket expenses and in-kind work done as part of the project will also be provided if done by the landowner. (See landowner billing rate below under "Cost-Share Not-to-Exceed Amounts").
 - The landowner will be sent a reimbursement check for up to one-half of actual ***incurred costs only***. This will not exceed one-half of the lowest bid, subject to established not-to-exceed cost-share amounts as listed below. **Only those costs incurred after project approval will be considered.**
 - ***Cost overruns will be the responsibility of the landowner and will not be accepted for the reimbursement.***
 - ***The project will not be considered complete until all hazardous fuels are removed from the project site.***
8. Maintenance: The Landowner shall agree to maintain the project area to specifications as outlined in the prescription of the work using Firewise guidelines where appropriate for a minimum of ten years after the completion of the project. The project will be inspected for compliance to the maintenance plan every 3 years by Division personnel. The landowner will be notified of any actions needed and provided assistance as necessary to keep the project viable for the minimum maintenance period. The Landowner agrees to give access to WFS personnel for the ten year time period for inspection.

Cost-Share Not-to-Exceed Amounts:

- Prescribed Burning: \$35/acre federal reimbursement, not to exceed \$3,500 federal reimbursement per project.
- Fuels Reduction Treatment and Thinning (Includes mechanical treatment and/or hand piling and pile burning and/or chipping): \$600/acre federal reimbursement.
- Pile Burning: \$5.00/pile federal reimbursement.

If a landowner elects to perform all or part of the work, their time, as well as other individual assistants will be billed at an AD-2 firefighter rate of \$11.62 an hour each not-to-exceed \$150/acre federal reimbursement for all personnel involved in thinning and piling. Pile burning costs will be reimbursed additionally at the above listed not-to-exceed amount.

Liability Statement:

The State of South Dakota will not be held liable for work that is conducted under this program on a landowner's property. The property owner will be responsible for all work being completed to the standards and specifications as described under this program, the prescription written for the project, location of property lines and any issues that may arise with neighboring properties, and the property owner's own expectations. All issues that arise with a contractor will be the responsibility of the property owner.