

Volunteer Firefighter Utility Benefit Program

Recommended Program Guidelines

04/02/2008

Overview-

Based upon the recent award to Pend Oreille Fire District No. 4 from FEMA/ DHS in the SAFER grant program for recruitment and retention, we are pleased to offer an additional benefit to your current volunteer members in good standing and an additional recruitment tool.

This benefit was developed to assist in the retention of the volunteers you have and hopefully assist in recruiting additional members for your department. The grant is available to your department for 4 years. We recommend you describe this as one of the benefits when recruiting new members.

Pend Oreille Fire District No. 4 will be the host and the clearing house for this grant. We will collect information from your department and then make a utility payment on behalf of your member towards their PUD utility bill. The amount of payment for each volunteer member is based upon an awarded amount of \$22,000 annually. Our grant request was based upon 220 volunteers in the county. This equals a \$100 benefit per member or approximately 10% of the average annual utility bill. As the number of volunteers reported increases or decreases, the benefit will increase or decrease. We will seek additional grant increases as the program realizes success.

Program Guidelines-

Each department that wishes to participate will establish and report a roster of *members in good standing* by **June 30** of each year to Pend Oreille Fire District No. 4.

This roster shall include each member by name, FD ID number and include a PUD account number. This account number information will not be shared outside of the PUD and Pend Oreille Fire District No. 4.

Those members reported on the department's roster will then receive a payment towards the listed PUD account number for the current year.

Recommendations

- This benefit is not intended for department members who are currently compensated for their services. This should include commissioners, secretaries, or other compensated members.
- A member in good standing should be;
 - a member who has completed the departments entry or probationary period
 - a member who is a regular participant in training sessions with the district (50% attendance minimum as a guideline)
 - a member who is a regular responder for emergencies in the district

- Represents the department in a professional manner
- Is recommended for the benefit by the Chief of the department
- This benefit is intended for each volunteer member.
 - Multiple payments can be made to one PUD account per family. i.e.; husband and wife are members in good standing, they receive two payments on one account
 - Junior Firefighters that meet the member in good standing guidelines for the department may receive a benefit payment towards the families account.
 - For members who do not have a PUD account number i.e., off the grid, not a PUD water user etc, Pend Oreille Fire District No. 4 will work with the member and a service provider to allow them to realize a benefit. This option is suggested as a secondary alternative and not a primary opportunity.
 - Members who are active with more than one department will only be eligible for one benefit payment annually.

It is imperative that the fire departments view this benefit as a reward for effective volunteer service. The value of the reward will be diminished if it is granted to members who in the perception of the department have not “earned” the reward.

Pend Oreille Fire District No. 4, as the grant recipient, reserves the right to amend the guidelines as needed and recommended by the participants of the benefit program.

Pend Oreille Fire District No. 4, as the grant recipient, also reserves the right to review the roster submitted if there seems to be an inaccurate account of the members.

Submit annual roster reports to-

Pend Oreille Fire District No. 4
11 Dalkena St.
Newport, WA 99156

Attn: Utility Benefit Program