



CITY OF SAN RAFAEL FIRE DEPARTMENT

WILDFIRE MITIGATION GRANT PROGRAM (WMGP GUIDELINES)

GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS

Overview of the Program

The City of San Rafael is offering a grant program to assist San Rafael property owners to reduce wildfire risks on their property. Qualifying work includes vegetation management within 30 feet of structures and home hardening efforts. The work completed will support the resident's compliance with the vegetation standards of San Rafael Municipal Code Chapter 4.12 or the California Fire Code 7A home hardening standards, which would include ember-resistant vents, dual-paned windows, etc. Only the person directly incurring the expense will be eligible for reimbursement. In general, this will be the property owner, however a renter that can provide documentation (such as a lease agreement) that the work is their responsibility may be eligible. This Grant Program is funded by the Marin Wildfire Prevention Authority (MWPA).

Available Funding

The City will offer up to \$500 per applicant to cover the expenses relating to vegetation management/fuel reduction and up to \$500 for home hardening. The \$500 grant does not require any matching funds. As an example, a resident may hire a contractor to remove juniper within 30 feet of a structure prior to a Marin Wildfire Prevention Authority/Fire Safe Marin chipper day and incur a bill of \$400. The City will reimburse the resident the full \$400 for that work.

The City will offer up to \$1,000 per applicant in matching funds for work relating to vegetation management/fuel reduction. The City will also offer up to \$1,000 per applicant in matching funds for work relating to home hardening (for example gutter screens, dual-paned windows, fire-resistant vents, etc). To receive the \$1,000 maximum for vegetation management/fuel reduction or home hardening, residents will need to provide documentation of \$2,000 or more in eligible expenses. As an example, if a resident spends \$1,500 on home hardening, the City will reimburse the resident \$750 for that work.

However, notwithstanding the foregoing, a resident is limited to a total of \$1,000 in assistance for vegetation management/fuel reduction and \$1,000 in home hardening/structural adaptations in a single calendar year. Eligibility for assistance in subsequent years may change and will be determined by the funding available. This assistance program is not intended to support routine or ongoing maintenance. At this time funds can only support risk reduction and not replanting or similar activities.

This program is separate and distinct from the direct assistance program, chipper program and partnership with AmeriCorps.

Residents may benefit from different MWPA project allocations, provided the work cost exceeds the total amount of the grants received. For example, for vegetation removal a resident cannot receive two \$500 grants for \$600 worth of the same work. However, a resident that spends \$12,000 may be eligible for two different matching grants.

If you have a large project, the City strongly recommends getting multiple bids for the work. Please reach out to srfd.grants@cityofsanrafael.org if you are receiving an estimate of over \$5,000. The City reserves the right to give additional assistance for special cases at their discretion. To receive assistance greater than \$1,000 dollars a resident may be asked to supply additional documentation, including proof of multiple bids or limited financial resources. The City retains the right to approve or deny requests at their discretion.

Eligible Work/Related Costs

The following standards are meant to prioritize the most urgent risk reduction work and may be adjusted as community needs change.

For the work to be eligible, it must be:

- Within 100 feet of structures or within 10 feet of a roadway or along a driveway to meet the access zone standards outlined in the most recent defensible space evaluation report. Work must be prioritized from the “house out.” Funds will not be awarded if a hazard 100 feet away from the home is addressed but a noted vegetation hazard within 5 feet of the home is not ignored. #
- Noted in your full defensible space evaluation
- Completed by a licensed contractor
- Directly incurred costs, such as the purchase of home hardening materials or disposal of vegetation

All work completed in the 2022-2023 will be eligible if it meets the above requirements and the resident can clearly demonstrate the work was eligible with before and after photos, or a defensible space evaluation report. A full defensible space evaluation is required in order to receive funds.

The City will cover the cost of encroachment permits in open space if the vegetation reduction work being performed is within 100 feet of the property.

Rules are Regulations

- Note: The City and MWPA follow a fiscal year that runs from July 1st-June 30th each year. #
- All grant applications received after June 15, 2023 at 5pm will be null and void for the 22-23 fiscal year. Grants applications received after the deadline will be processed in the upcoming fiscal year. Retro applications will not be accepted.
- Residents may only apply once every fiscal year for each grant.#
- Residents who have not received grant funds can still apply for work done in 2021- 2022 but they will not be eligible for expenses accrued in the 22-23 fiscal year.#
- Residents who have previously received grant funds are eligible for 2022-2023 grant funds if work was done within that fiscal year.#

Process

Administration of the grant program shall follow the following procedure:

- A full defensible space evaluation by the Department must occur before or after work is completed, provided before photos are available

- Property owner/Resident is responsible for work to be completed
- Property owner/Resident handles payment with the licensed contractor, or has directly purchased supplies
- Property owner/Resident submits required documentation to the Fire Department, including:
 - Before and After photos
 - Invoice/Bill outlining work completed or item receipt purchased and associated costs, must be specific to show eligible work. * For example, "Removal of Juniper" is eligible, however "landscaping" is not.
 - Applicants' name
 - Address of the property#
 - Licensed Contractor or vendor information#
 - Date and itemized description of the work completed and cost#
 - Proof of payment (such as a copy of a deposited check, credit card statement, Venmo or PayPal printout, or cash receipt)
 - Signed Application
 - Signed Grant Agreement
- Once received, the Fire department will review the grant application packet within two to four weeks. If it is completely eligible and the work has already been completed, a grant will be awarded. Notice of grant approval or denial will be given within 30 days. Payment may take an additional 30 days to be received.

*If the receipt includes non-qualifying items, non-qualifying item and all sales tax will be excluded from consideration in the grant packet. For example, if a receipt from a hardware store includes vents and a snack or paint. The city will only pay for direct qualifying items and the sales tax will be excluded.

If mailing or dropping off the application, please send to:
 1375 Fifth Avenue, San Rafael, CA 94901
 Attn: Wildfire Mitigation Grant Program