

**State Fire Marshal's Office
P.O. Box 1269
Santa Fe, NM 87504-1269
1-800-244-6702**

**PROCEDURES FOR STARTING A NEW FIRE DEPARTMENT
(in accordance with the Fire Protection Fund Act)**

Establishment of a New Fire Department (actions are to be taken in order)

1. Local citizens express interest to start a fire department to their respective local government. Local government shall request from the State Fire Marshal an on-site visit of the proposed response area to determine the feasibility of starting a new department.
2. The citizens of the community, or communities, organize a fire department. To achieve an Operational/Functional Status the department must have sufficient membership to assure the response of at least 4 members to structure fires. To meet this minimum requirement, the department should have at least 12 adults willing and able to volunteer their services as firefighters.
3. Identify water sources within the proposed response area. Ideally, all single point water sources should have a minimum of 30,000 gallons of water usable for suppression. Written permission from property owners shall be obtained in which they agree to allow the fire department to use private water sources.
4. The organized fire department must petition the local government to establish the fire department by appropriate resolution. The resolution shall contain a legal description of the response area boundaries by section, township and range.
5. The local government must submit to the State Fire Marshal two copies of the resolution along with two clear and concise maps depicting the boundaries of the response area. The maps should be of a scale that clearly depicts the district and identifies the range and township. The preferred scale is 1 inch = 2 miles. The district boundaries should be outlined by two narrow, parallel black lines. All sources of water for firefighting within the boundaries shall be clearly indicated on the map. An additional copy of the resolution and map should be:
 - a) on file with the local government;
 - b) on file with the fire department (a copy of the map should be posted).
6. Once items 1 – 5 are completed, the State Fire Marshal shall place the new department on probation for one year. The fire department's one-year probation

period shall start no earlier than the date of the local government resolution.

7. During that one-year period, the fire department should obtain essential firefighting and personal protective equipment using the resources of the local community. This should include:

Firefighter's protective clothing; bunker coat, bunker pants, boots, helmet and gloves; a set for each firefighter.

4 - self contained breathing apparatus (SCBA's)

2 – 150 foot lengths of ¾ or 1 inch booster hose or 1 ½ or 1 ¾ inch pre-connected hoses with nozzles.

2 – portable fire extinguishers class AB and c with a minimum of 20 BC of dry chemical, 10 BC of CO2 and a 2A rating.

1 – 12 foot – 16 foot roof ladder with folding hooks

1 – 24 foot or longer extension ladder

1 – pick head axe

2 – electric hand lights, (4 volt wet, 6 volt dry or 6 volt rechargeable with moveable heads) not flashlights

1 – Pike pole

1 – bolt cutter

1 – claw tool (hooligan tool)

1 – crow bar

8. As a minimum, obtain a fire truck that meets the criteria for an initial attack or pumper apparatus. The truck should be operable and safe. The truck should have at least a 250 gallon-per-minute (GPM) pump and a 300 gallon water tank. A waiver may be granted by the State Fire Marshal for an apparatus not meeting this requirement. The request for a waiver shall include a detailed plan that establishes how this requirement is to be eventually met.

9. The apparatus shall be housed to provide adequate protection. The structure should be owned or leased to the local government, however, while on probation other arrangements approved by the local government are acceptable.

Certification of a New Fire Department

1. The department shall have been on probation for a period of no less than one year.
2. There shall be an alarm notification system in place. This system shall be designed so that there is no delay in the receipt of alarms and the dispatch of firefighters. Systems that depend upon telephone call lists, group telephone alerting systems that ring fewer than eight telephones in the homes or businesses of firefighters, or where an individual shall travel in excess of two hundred feet to activate an alerting system are not acceptable. A waiver may be granted by the State Fire Marshal for a specific period if there is a detailed plan that establishes how this requirement is

to be met.

3. As a minimum the following records shall be on file with the fire department:
 - a) Response records that indicate the date, times (alarm to return to service), location and type of response and the number and names of responders.
 - b) Training records that indicate the date, times (start to end), location and description of training and the number and names of attendees.
 - c) Minutes of department business meetings.
 - d) Maintenance records of equipment and apparatus.
 - e) Up-to-date roster of fire department members.
4. No later than thirty days prior to the end of one-year probation period, provide the State Fire Marshal with the following:
 - a) A description of the alarm system.
 - b) A complete itemized inventory of firefighting equipment and apparatus.
 - c) A roster of firefighters names, addresses and telephone numbers.
 - d) A written request for a certification inspection.
5. A department failing to comply with any portion of the certification requirements shall remain on probation until such time that all requirements are met.
6. Upon review and approval of all requirements, probationary departments shall be certified by written notice.

Funding of a New Fire Department

1. Certified new departments shall receive their first year funding based on pro rata distribution of the department's ISO class. Departments that have not been evaluated by ISO shall have their pro rata distribution based on an ISO class 10. The distribution shall be based on the state's fiscal year.
2. All subsequent annual funding shall be based on the department's ISO classification and number of approved main and substations.