

Oregon State Fire Marshal

Defensible Space Assessment Incentive Reimbursement Pilot Program Guidelines

INTRODUCTION

Creating defensible space — reducing or eliminating the things around a home and property that can catch fire — enhances community resilience and protects against wildfire damage. The Oregon State Fire Marshal's **Defensible Space Assessment Incentive Reimbursement Pilot Program** provides eligible participants in selected high-wildfire hazard and socially vulnerable communities with \$250 to help offset defensible space improvement costs. This program incentivizes proactive wildfire prevention and empowers Oregonians to create defensible space around their homes and properties, supported by *limited, one-time funding*.

ELIGIBILITY

Community Selection Criteria

The program incentivizes Oregon communities identified as having high fire exposure or areas located near a wildfire OSFM was mobilized to in the past 10 years. The selection is based on a comprehensive analysis, incorporating data from the Social Vulnerability Index by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the 2018 Pyrologix report, and mobilizations by the OSFM to wildfires that directly threatened life and property in the past 10 years.

The \$250 funding level was determined based on the national volunteer wage of \$31/hour, reimbursing participants for about eight hours of defensible space work.

Participant Eligibility

- Participants must live in a selected high-hazard community.
 - Homeowners, renters, and property owners are eligible.
- Participants must request and receive a defensible space assessment by members of the fire service or OSFM personnel.
- To qualify for the incentive, participants must have at least two areas of improvement as identified on the OSFM's defensible space assessment checklist, including:
 - Flammable vegetation is removed from growing directly under the eaves - the edge of a roof that sticks out or hangs over the building's side. A minimum of five feet from the structure is recommended.
 - Leaves, conifer needles, deadwood, bark mulch, and other debris are removed from the surface of, around, and below decks and fences.
 - Trees spaced and pruned following the example on [page 2](#). Trim trees, shrubs, or bushes by cutting away dead or overgrown branches or stems.
 - Leaves, conifer needles, deadwood, bark mulch, and other debris are removed from within 100 feet of the structure or to the property line.
 - Fire-resistive plants are spaced within the designated defensible space area. Grass is mowed to less than four inches.
 - Firewood piles and lumber are at least 30 feet from any structure.
 - Combustible vegetation is 10 feet away from permanent propane tanks.
- Participants that qualify must opt-in to receive the \$250 incentive payment.

*Eligible Communities**

Ashland	Green Meadows	Oregon Shores
Bay City	Halfway	Paisley
Beavercreek	Hermiston	Parkdale
Biggs Junction	Hines	Pendleton
Black Butte Ranch	Hood River	Phoenix
Boardman	Huntington	Pilot Rock
Bonanza	Idanha	Pine Grove
Brogan	Idaville	Pine Hollow
Burns	Independence	Prairie City
Butte Falls	Irrigon	Prineville
Canyon City	Island City	Redmond
Canyonville	Jasper	Redwood
Cascade Locks	John Day	Richland
Cascadia	Junction City	Riddle
Cave Junction	Juniper Canyon	Riverside
Cayuse	Kerby	Rogue River
Central Point	Kirkpatrick	Rose Lodge
Chenoweth	La Grande	Rowena
Cherry Grove	La Pine	Salem
Chiloquin	Lincoln City	Scotts Mills
Cottage Grove	Lonerock	Selma
Crooked River Ranch	Lyons	Shady Cove
Culver	Madras	Spray
Days Creek	Medford	Springfield
Dayville	Mehama	Stanfield
Detroit	Merlin	Takilma
Dufur	Metolius	Talent
Eagle Crest	Mill City	Terrebonne
Eagle Point	Mission	The Dalles
Elgin	Mitchell	Tillamook
Estacada	Monument	Trail
Eugene	Moro	Tri-City
Foots Creek	Mosier	Tutuilla
Fort Klamath	Mount Hood	Tygh Valley
Fossil	Mulino	Ukiah
Garibaldi	Myrtle Creek	Umatilla
Gates	Neotsu	Vale
Glendale	New Hope	Wamic
Glide	Newberg	Warm Springs
Gold Hill	Oakridge	White City
Gopher Flats	O'Brien	Williams
Grants Pass	Odell	
Grass Valley	Ontario	

One gift card per person (i.e., if a person owns more than one eligible property, they can only receive one gift card).

**Eligible Communities:*

As of December 2, 2024, there are two ways to meet the spatial criteria for financial incentive eligibility:

1. Being within an eligible community as defined below, and/or
2. Being within three miles of an area covered by a fire perimeter that was part of an OSFM immediate response mobilization or a conflagration in the past 10 years.

The eligible communities are the city/census-designated place (CDP) boundaries (city limits) plus a 3-mile buffer of wildland-urban interface (WUI) areas around the community, minus areas that overlap with neighboring communities as they may have different Social Vulnerability Index (SVI) or wildfire vulnerability ranking. If an area has high SVI and high wildfire vulnerability or it's within the footprint of an OSFM mobilization within 10 years, it is eligible. The SVI is based on social vulnerability index data from the CDC.

PROGRAM DETAILS

Defensible Space Assessment

- [Participants can request a free defensible space assessment here.](#)
- The assessment will be conducted by a trained professional to evaluate the property's vulnerability to wildfires and provide recommendations for creating or improving defensible space.

Incentive Payment

- Upon completion of the defensible space assessment, eligible participants will receive a \$250 Visa® prepaid gift card¹ by mail from the OSFM. **Please allow up to eight weeks for the gift card to arrive by mail.**
- The \$250 Visa® prepaid gift card is intended to encourage residents to implement the recommendations received during the assessment to enhance the defensibility of their properties.

Effective Date

This program became effective on March 11, 2024, and the new criteria is effective on December 2, 2024.

Program Administration

The incentive payment program will be administered by the Oregon State Fire Marshal. Local fire agency personnel will collaborate in certain areas by providing participants with free defensible space assessments.

Funding Allocation

Program funds were made possible by Senate Bill 762.

Public Awareness and Outreach

¹ Visa is a registered trademark of Visa International Service Association.

The Oregon State Fire Marshal will conduct a public awareness campaign to inform Oregonians about the program and encourage participation.

CONCLUSION

The OSFM Defensible Space Assessment Incentive Reimbursement Program is a crucial step toward building a more resilient community in the face of increasing wildfire risks. By empowering Oregonians to take proactive measures, we will reduce the impact of wildfires on lives, property, and the environment.