

(1) review the financial statements and documentation submitted in accordance with subsection (b) of this section to determine if the money was spent in accordance with the request for money approved by the Board of Public Works; and

(2) report the findings to the Department and, subject to § 2-1246 of the State Government Article, to the Joint Audit Committee of the General Assembly.] [8-204.] 8-203.

(a) The purpose of the Fund is to ensure adequate fire protection and rescue services in the State.

(b) A grant or loan awarded under this section shall be used only for purchasing, replacing, or improving:

(1) equipment, including elevated equipment, pumpers, tankers, ladder trucks, ambulances, rescue vehicles, or other large equipment used for fire fighting and emergency services;

(2) communications equipment;

(3) protective equipment, including helmets, turnout coats and pants, boots, eyeshields, gloves, and self-contained respiratory protection units;

(4) any other equipment necessary to carry out the ordinary functions of supporting fire fighting and rescue activities; or

(5) facilities used to house fire fighting equipment, ambulances, and rescue vehicles.

(c) (1) (i) A volunteer company receiving [money] A GRANT from the Fund shall provide at least a 30% match of the amount of the grant [or loan].

(ii) If a volunteer company cannot reasonably provide the required match before the [money] GRANT is disbursed, the Board of Public Works may waive the requirement or may allow repayment of the match within a reasonable time not exceeding 18 months after the purchase, replacement, or improvement of the equipment or facilities.

(2) (i) Money to provide the required match may include contributions from local government.

(ii) A local government may not reduce the amount of money that the volunteer company would otherwise be entitled to receive from the local government because of State money provided under this section.

(3) LOANS FROM THE FUND MAY ONLY BE AWARDED TO ASSIST WITH UP TO 75% OF THE TOTAL COST OF THE EQUIPMENT OR FACILITIES BEING PURCHASED.

(d) After a favorable recommendation from the [Department] ASSOCIATION, the Board of Public Works may award a grant, loan, or both from the Fund to a volunteer company if: