



Fire Safety Account

Financial report fiscal year 2025

January 1, 2026

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Fire Safety Account: fiscal year 2025 (FY25)

Overview

The Minnesota Legislature passed a bill in 2006 establishing a fire safety surcharge on homeowner and certain commercial insurance policies. The Fire Safety Account (FSA) was established in Minnesota Statute 297I.06, subdivision 3 to collect revenue generated by that surcharge.

Separate legislation under Minnesota Statute 299F.012, subdivision 2 created a Fire Service Advisory Committee (FSAC) to make funding recommendations to the commissioner of public safety for the following purposes:

1. The Minnesota Board of Firefighter Training and Education (MBFTE).
2. Programs and staffing for the Minnesota Department of Public Safety's (DPS) State Fire Marshal (SFM) division.
3. Fire-related regional response-team programs and other fire service programs that have the potential for statewide impact.

The FSAC is made up of representatives from state fire service associations, local government and the insurance industry. The FSAC meets quarterly to review the FSA's status and funding allotments. The FSAC also provides stakeholder input on operating budget considerations to the commissioner for the State Fire Marshal division and Minnesota Board of Firefighter Training.

FY25 appropriations

DPS transferred money from the FSA according to the appropriations made by the Minnesota Legislature in the 2023 Session Laws, chapter 52, article 1, section 3.

- SFM: \$10,487,000
- Hazardous Materials and Emergency Response Teams (HMRTs): \$1,595,000
- Bomb squad reimbursements: \$250,000
- Non-responsible party reimbursements: \$750,000
- MBFTE: \$5,500,000
- Minnesota Task Force 1 (MN TF-1): \$1,125,000
- Minnesota Task Force 2 (MN TF-2): \$200,000
- Minnesota Air Rescue Team (MART): \$350,000

FY25 account summary

Resources

- Balance forward from prior year: \$19,716
- Receipts: \$35,072

Total resources available: \$54,788

Uses

- SFM: \$12,605
- MBFTE: \$11,166
- FY25 FSAC recommendations, allocated by the commissioner: \$6,569

Total uses: \$30,340

- Balance before reserves: \$24,448
- 60-day operating reserve for FY25 budget: \$4,987

Budgetary balance: \$19,461

One-time allocations for fiscal year 2025

In FY25, the FSAC recommended one-time funding of \$7,152,896 from the fire safety account, which was approved and allocated by DPS Commissioner Bob Jacobson on September 13, 2024, for the purposed listed below.

- MBFTE increase per firefighter cost of training: \$3 million
- MBFTE fire service leadership training: \$295,580
- MBFTE training for stored energy: \$250,000
- SFM service planning grants: \$90,000
- SFM fire investigation training: \$75,000
- SFM HAZMAT equipment: \$365,000
- SFM MART training: \$150,000
- SFM expert witness testimony classes: \$17,000
 - Grant to Minnesota Chapter of the International Association of Arson Investigators (MN-IAAI)
- SFM creation of evidence collection technician kits: \$17,000
 - Grant to MN-IAAI
- SFM burn to learn classes: \$15,000
 - Grant to MN-IAAI
- SFM MN TF-1 response packages - \$1.8 million
- SFM MN TF-2 response packages - \$1,078,316

MBFTE

Minnesota fire departments had access to a \$5 million budget appropriation and a \$3 million one-time allocation from the FSA in FY25. More than \$7.1 million in training reimbursements was requested by 647 of the 770 Minnesota fire departments in FY25. The average training reimbursement per fire department in FY25 was \$9,320 based on the number of fire departments that submitted their requests.

Other FY25 highlights

- The MBFTE provided reimbursement for National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1001, Firefighter 1, Firefighter 2 and Hazardous Materials Operations training. There was \$2.2 million available to Minnesota fire departments to pay for this training — enough to fund more than 1,200 firefighters.
- Approximately \$171,000 was available to fund 88 live-burn training events across Minnesota. Live-burn training is conducted in accordance with NFPA 1403 standards, which ensure all burns are conducted in a safe manner meeting a nationally recognized standard and meeting the statutory requirements of the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR).
- The MBFTE provided more than \$186,000 for 228 firefighters to attend continuing education courses and pass national certification exams in fire instructor, fire officer and fire apparatus operator.
- The MBFTE provided more than \$28,000 in reimbursements to local, regional and statewide fire service organizations for unique training events, conference and seminars. These awards helped nearly 1,400 firefighters attend a total of nine different training opportunities at a significantly reduced rate.
- Per Minnesota Statute, Chapter 299N.05, full-time firefighters are required to be licensed by the board, while volunteer firefighters have the option to be licensed. There are currently 2,724 full-time firefighters in Minnesota (7 percent increase from previous year), and there are a total of 4,206 firefighter licenses issued by the MBFTE (7.5 percent increase from previous year).

SFM

Approximately 70 percent of SFM's budget comes from the FSA and general fund appropriations. The remaining 30 percent comes from fees and contracts for health care, daycare, school and motel inspections.

FY25 FSA dollars provided operational funding to SFM for the following:

- Health care and Department of Corrections (DOC) facilities inspection team
- Public and public charter school inspection team
- Residential care and lodging (RC&L) inspection team
- Fire protection systems plan review and inspection team
- Fire investigation team
- Fire and life safety education and youth fire-setter intervention
- Administrative, management and other support services (such as fire service specialists)
- Fire incident data collection and analysis

FSA funding supports statutory-required fire inspection, fire investigation and fire sprinkler plan reviews. Inspections performed by the teams listed above help improve fire safety in many public buildings (e.g., schools, hotels/motels, hospitals). Fire investigations are performed to determine origin and cause following a fire. The findings from our fire investigations team support law enforcement arson cases and provide data to aid in fire prevention messaging.

Jan. 1-Dec. 31, 2024, inspections, investigations and fire sprinkler plan review

- Health care: 1,155
- DOC facilities: 205
- RC&L: 3,157
- Investigations: 777
- Schools: 1,097
- Fire sprinkler plan reviews: 605

Fire service planning grants

The fire service planning grant program is a funding opportunity that supports local communities as they hire contractors to assess their fire protection and service delivery needs. "Sharing services" refers to a few ways in which fire and rescue organizations are working together to increase efficiency and effectiveness of fire protection. These studies and reports generally impact multiple cities and towns. Additionally, when studies are completed, fire departments may use remaining funding to help implement agreed-upon recommendations. This grant program includes a competitive application and scoring process. In FY25, two projects were funded: Pine City Township and Long Lake-Wayzata. Both projects will submit final reports in FY26.

Training for local fire code officials, inspectors and investigators

The FSA allows SFM to provide fire investigation, fire code, fire protection system and fire safety education training for the Minnesota fire service at no cost. This augments local government budgets, especially training dollars that are often in short supply on a local level.

The SFM investigations team provided awareness-level training to students throughout the state in operations and technician-level classes. These fire investigation classes have a class make-up of firefighters, law enforcement, attorneys and other fire service stakeholders. The classes are intended to give students knowledge, ranging from basic awareness of scene preservations until a more trained investigator arrives, to the technical level training that a fire investigator would use to examine a fire scene.

The SFM code team works together to provide a week-long training at Camp Ripley aimed at local fire code officials who want to improve their skills and learn more about the Minnesota State Fire Code. Staff from all the code enforcement/inspection teams work together to teach classroom lessons and hands-on training. Staff from 2024 Fire Code Academy had 34 hours of classroom training, 19 classes and 28 students in attendance. Additionally, the code team offered training to Department of Human Services (DHS) licensors, the Family Childcare Licensors Association, Leading Age Minnesota, Hospitality Minnesota, health care professionals, correctional staff and education professionals.

The fire and life safety educator team attended several statewide events that involved meeting with county and regional fire chiefs to discuss fire safety messaging that could be used on various online platforms (fire department website, Facebook, X) to reach their local communities. During these meetings, the team highlighted its risk assessment tool, UrbanLogiq, to establish data trends so department leadership could understand the risks in their local jurisdiction. The team also hosted UrbanLogiq learning sessions to encourage fire department members to use the system. The fire and life safety educator team staffed statewide fire safety educational community events, which allowed them to interact with Tribal members, city and county employees, local fire department retired members and numerous residents of all ages and backgrounds. Through these efforts they met with multiple firefighters from several different fire departments.

State Emergency Response Teams

FY25 funds allocated to Minnesota's HMRTs were used to buy chemical monitoring and field detection equipment.

FY25 funds allocated to MART were used to cover in-service training costs with the new Bell 429 helicopter and advanced hoist capabilities. The new helicopter, hoist equipment and capabilities expand the flight distance of the team and hoisting options for rescues in very remote areas, such as the Boundary Waters Canoe Area.

FY25 funds allocated to the state's urban search and rescue teams (MN- TF1 and TF2) were used to purchase multiple response vehicles (including towable trailers), rescue and stabilization equipment and mobile/vehicle-based communications equipment.

SFM staff continue to work with the HMRTs and task force teams to identify gaps in administration and operation. Currently, identified gaps show the need for improved processes for team procurement of

equipment with state funds, better inventory maintenance and tracking of equipment purchased with state funds and the need for a detailed capital replacement plan to strategically plan and budget for vehicle and equipment replacement as these resources age. Additionally, modifications have been made to team contracts to strengthen internal controls specific to physical resource procurement. As SFM staff continue to work on closing these identified gaps, the teams continue to operate at the high level they have been known for with no gaps in service.

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