



Getting a Job as a Seasonal Wildland Firefighter

The National Interagency Fire Center receives calls throughout the year from people interested in finding a job as a seasonal wildland firefighter. This brochure is designed to give job seekers some guidance in becoming a wildland firefighter.

Many local, state and federal agencies hire wildland firefighters, and there is more than one kind of wildland firefighter. NIFC recommends doing some research prior to starting your job search, so that you know the kind of job you're looking for, the part of the country where you'd like to work and live, the pay you expect to earn, and the kind of organization you'd like to work for.

Your research should also consider the application process used by the organization you wish to work for. Firefighters are hired generally at the local level, not at NIFC. Take some time to study the application and the hiring process used by the organization you've chosen. A thorough and well prepared application is critical to moving forward in the selection process.

In general, be prepared to emphasize any experience and training you have that is relevant to being a wildland firefighter. Good rookie firefighters often have:

- Experience burning brush piles or grassy fields
- Hiking, climbing, or other outdoors experience
- Good health and physical fitness
- Familiarity with living and working for extended periods of time in the outdoors
- Skill in operating power equipment, like chainsaws, safely and productively
- Experience working lengthy shifts doing hard, physical work out-of-doors
- Experience working in a crew setting requiring teamwork

Hiring is done locally, so make the effort to contact the hiring officials in your area—or the area where you would like to work. They are the best source of specific information relevant to your job search.

Don't wait too long to start your job search process. Many units do their crew hiring in the winter or early spring.

Good luck!

The National Interagency Fire Center