USDA eAuthentication for Vendors:
Upgrading from a Level 1 to a Level 2 Account

Beginning in 2009, all Forest Service vendors/contractors who wish to obtain a new preseason incident agreement[1] or update an existing preseason incident agreement with the Forest Service must have a USDA Level 2 eAuthentication (eAuth) account.

IMPORTANT

- **Without a Level 2 eAuth account, you will NOT be given access to the USDA Forest Service Virtual Incident Procurement (VIPR) system[2] (available in 2009) where you will need to electronically sign and submit your agreement with the Forest Service before it can be considered in the solicitation review process.**

- **If you already have a Level 2 eAuth account with another USDA agency, you should use that Level 2 account for the Forest Service VIPR program—no additional eAuth action will be required. Level 2 accounts require in-person verification of a government-issued ID. If you do not recall completing this step, you probably do not have a Level 2 account. If you are unsure whether you already have a Level 1 or Level 2 account with either the Forest Service or another USDA agency, follow the instructions in the Appendix of this document to determine if you have an eAuth account and what type of account you have.**

- **If you do NOT already have a Level 1 account, you will be unable to follow these "upgrade" procedures. Instead, you will need to create a new Level 2 account by following the instructions at http://www.fs.fed.us/business/incident/eauth.php and link to "USDA eAuthentication for Vendors: Creating a New Level 2 Account."**

- **You must have a valid e-mail address to complete the eAuthentication process. If you do not already have one, you can obtain an e-mail address from your Internet Service Provider (ISP) or you can use one of the many free services available on the Web.**

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[1] Preseason incident agreements are also known as Emergency Equipment Rental Agreements (EERAs) or Incident Blanket Purchase Agreements (I-BPAs).

[2] VIPR is a new information system that will automate the solicitation, award, and management of preseason incident agreements. VIPR is part of the Forest Service's overall Incident Business system that automates the agency's incident business requirements, decreases paperwork, and integrates business processes. VIPR will feed information to other systems that you may have heard of or worked with: Resource Ordering and Status System (ROSS), I-Suite, the Aviation Business System, and the Incident Business Database. For more information about VIPR, please contact your Regional FS Contracting Officer (list of contacts located at: http://www.fs.fed.us/business/incident/contacts.php).

To upgrade from a Level 1 to a Level 2 eAuth account, do the following:

1   Access the USDA eAuthentication Web site at http://www.eauth.egov.usda.gov.

2   From the Quick Links menu, click on **Update Your Account**.

3   From the message box regarding the policy on using USDA computers, click the **Continue** button.

4   From the eAuthentication Login screen, enter your current eAuthentication user ID and password, and then click the **Login** button.

> **NOTE:**   If you have forgotten your user ID and/or password, follow the instructions on the eAuthentication Login screen for assistance in retrieving this information.

5   From the left menu of the IdentityMinder screen, click on **Apply for Customer Level 2 Authentication**.

6   Enter the required information.

NOTES: You must complete all required fields, which are marked with an asterisk (*). And, although they are not marked with an asterisk, all of the security questions at the bottom of the screen are also required.

For the password requirement, you may use the password that you created for your Level 1 Account or you may create a new one. Rules for password creation are very specific and are outlined below in "HELPFUL PASSWORD TIPS."

For the PIN requirement, you may select any 4-digit number that does NOT begin with zero (e.g., 1111, 9076, etc.). The PIN may be used by the IBS Helpdesk to verify your identity if you require helpdesk assistance with your Level 2 eAuth account. *For Equipment and Training Inventory System (EaTIS) Vendors: The eAuth PIN is <u>NOT</u> the same as your EaTIS PIN, so you will need to create a new eAuth PIN.*

HELPFUL PASSWORD TIPS
Ensure your password meets the following criteria:

- **Is 9-12 characters**

- **Includes at least one upper-case letter (A, B, C, etc.) and at least one lower-case letter (a, b, c, etc.)**

- **Includes at least one of these characters: 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 ! # $ % = + : ; , ? ~ * -**

- **Is NOT a word in the dictionary**

- **Is NOT any information from your profile (e.g., Mother's Maiden Name, Date of Birth, PIN, Your Name, Address, Phone Number, etc.)**

Ensure you remember your eAuthentication user ID, password, and PIN, as well as the answers you used for the security questions, because you will need this information to access your account again in the future.

7 Once you have entered all of the information, click the **Validate** button to check for errors.

8 Click the **Submit** button. A status screen appears.
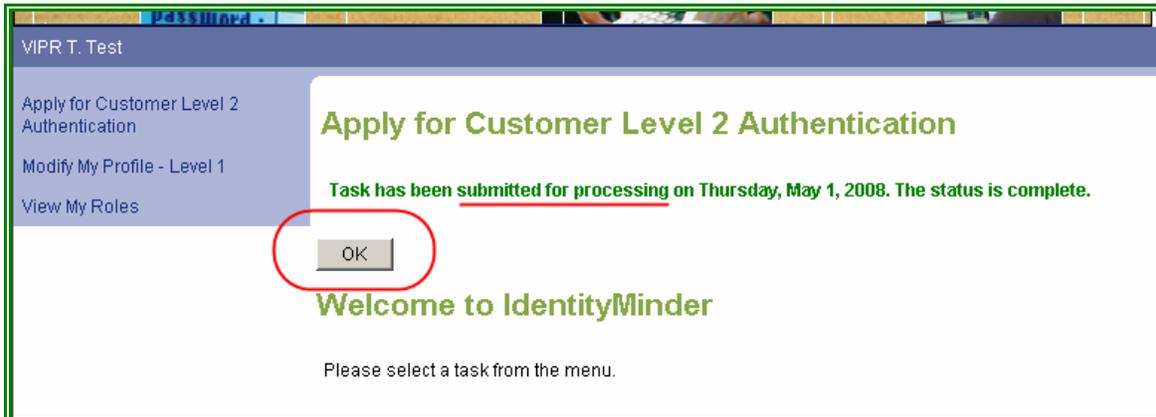
9 Click the **OK** button. Your request is submitted and will be processed within one hour of receipt.

10 At least one hour after submitting your request, check your e-mail for a message from eAuthHelpDesk@ftc.usda.gov with the Subject: *USDA Upgrade to Account with Level 2 Access and Password Change*.

NOTE:	If you have not received the account activation e-mail within an hour of your submittal, please look for the e-mail in your Junk or Spam e-mail file folders before contacting the Forest Service Incident Business Solutions Helpdesk at (866) 224-7677.

11 Follow the instructions included in the email.
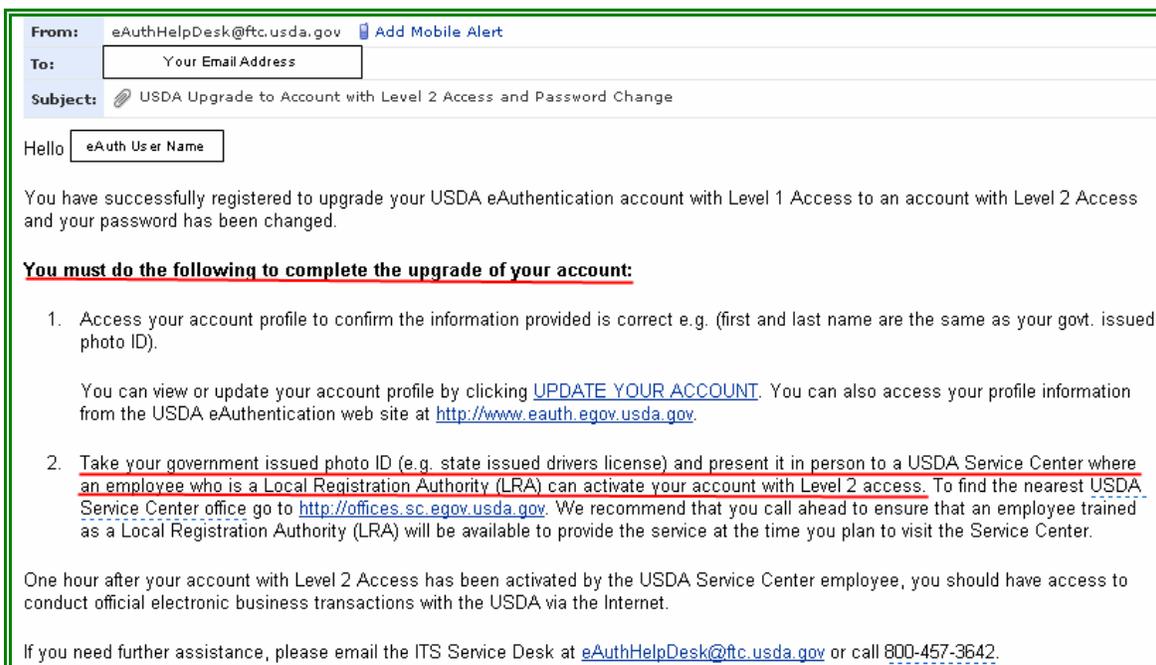
12 In accordance with the instructions included in the e-mail, validate your identity **in person** with a USDA or Forest Service Local Registration Authority (LRA)[3] representative by doing the following:

a) Access the VIPR Service Center and Local Registration Authority Locator Web site (http://www.fs.fed.us/business/incident/LRA) to find a USDA Service Center or Forest Service Local Registration Authority location near you.

b) Call ahead to schedule an appointment with the LRA at the location you wish to visit.

> **Since many locations have only one LRA and the LRA may be out of the office, you will want to call to schedule an appointment with the LRA <u>BEFORE</u> you go to the location.**

c) For your scheduled appointment, take one valid form of photo identification and present it **in person** to the LRA.

> **NOTE:** Valid forms of photo identification include
> - USA state driver's license
> - USA state photo ID
> - USA passport
> - USA military ID
> - Canadian driver's license
> - Canadian passport
> - Department of States global ID (GLID) badge

One hour after the LRA has activated your account, you should have access to conduct official electronic business transactions with the USDA via the Internet.

> **NOTE:** If you need further assistance, please contact the Forest Service Incident Business Solutions Helpdesk at (866) 224-7677.

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[3] An LRA is the only person who can verify your identity and approve your Level 2 eAuthentication account.

Appendix: Determining If You Have a Level 1 or Level 2 eAuth Account

To determine if you have a Level 1 or Level 2 eAuth account, follow the procedures listed below.

1 Access the USDA eAuthentication Web site at http://www.eauth.egov.usda.gov.

2 From the Quick Links menu, click on **Update Your Account**.

3 From the message box regarding the policy on using USDA computers, click the **Continue** button.

4 From the eAuthentication Login screen, enter your eAuthentication user ID and password, and then click the **Login** button.

> **NOTE:** If you have forgotten your user ID and/or password, follow the instructions on the eAuthentication Login screen for assistance in retrieving this information.

From the left menu of the IdentityMinder screen, you will see one of the following options:

Modify My Profile - Level 2. This will be an option if you already have a Level 2 eAuth account that will work with the Forest Service. No additional action is required prior to using VIPR.

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OR

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Apply for Customer Level 2 Authentication. This will be an option if you have a Level 1 eAuth account. You will need to follow the instructions in this guide to upgrade your existing Level 1 eAuth account to Level 2.