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Happy Volunteer Fire Department completes a military truck conversion

HAPPY, Texas — A \$20,000 cost share grant through the Rural Volunteer Fire Department Assistance Program helped Happy Volunteer Fire Department complete the conversion of a 1990, 5-ton cargo truck. The truck was awarded through the Department of Defense Firefighter Property Program. Both programs are administered through Texas A&M Forest Service and funded by Texas State Legislature.

“The primary use of this apparatus will be for wildland fire fighting,” said Scott Downing, Happy Volunteer Firefighter and Financial Administrator. “The truck has a 1,850-gallon water capacity and a foam system that will be vital for rural response.”

Safety is a high priority for the department so the truck is also equipped with a wildland water cannon on the front bumper allowing the volunteers to safely fight fire remotely and from a greater distance. There is also a new firefighting deck on the back, wireless communication system and water turrets on all four corners of the truck.

“Even though this truck is primarily for wildland fires, it has a high ground clearance and can be useful in high water or snow rescues,” said Downing. “Twice we have rescued stranded motorists during snow storms. One of those times, there were 112 stranded travelers from 17 different countries and they were most grateful for this beast of a machine.”

According to Downing, the department is thankful to Nichols Body shop who painted the truck at no expense to the department, also to Atmos Energy, Excel Energy, Happy State Bank, Texas A&M Forest Service and the Texas State Legislature for making the truck and slip-on unit possible.

“This truck with its advanced technology will be used to help a lot of people in the future, whether fire or rescue, it’s a tough super six,” said Downing.

Happy VFD has been serving their community since 1928. Anyone wanting to join the 17 committed volunteers may call Happy City Hall at (806) 558-2121.

For more information on programs offered by Texas A&M Forest Service, please visit <http://texasfd.com>.

