

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Raisin Volunteer Fire Department assigns a new role to an excess military truck

VICTORIA, Texas – Raisin Volunteer Fire Department converted an excess military truck into a firefighting machine with the help of a \$20,000 grant. The grant is through the Rural Volunteer Fire Department Assistance Program and was used to purchase a new slip-on unit. The truck is received through the DoD Firefighter Property Program, both programs are administered by Texas A&M Forest Service.

“This military truck conversion is a new addition to our fleet and will serve as a dual-purpose apparatus, primarily as a brush truck and secondarily for high water rescue,” said Raisin VFD President Wesley Schmidt.

The truck has a 500-gallon water tank, ground sweep nozzles and will carry wildland firefighting tools and personal flotation devices. The tank was designed as an inverted “T” to allow seating for individuals during high water rescues.

“This truck will allow our department to have a larger water supply, giving us greater capabilities in the initial attack on a fire,” said Schmidt. “Because it has the capacity to be a dual-purpose apparatus it will be beneficial for high water rescue in lower lying areas.”

One of the stipulations when receiving an excess military truck is that it be painted a nonmilitary color and be service ready in 180 days.

“Several of our department members dedicated many hours to converting the truck and making it service ready within the designated time period,” said Schmidt. “Their time and efforts are greatly appreciated.”

According to Schmidt, training is ongoing to match the capabilities of the truck and it will be in service this month.

“This converted military truck will be an invaluable asset to Raisin VFD and Victoria County, especially during flooding events and periods of increased wildfire activity,” said Texas A&M Forest Service Regional Fire Coordinator Roel Esparza. “Our Agency remains committed to serving rural volunteer fire departments and the citizens of Texas through various grant programs.”

Raisin Volunteer Fire Department has been serving their community since 1967 and has open enrollment for volunteers. To apply, please email rvfd999@gmail.com.

Texas A&M Forest Service is an agency operating within the Texas A&M University System and as the administrator of the Department of Defense (DoD) Firefighter Property Program is committed to protecting lives, property and natural resources. The DoD Firefighter Property Program launched in Texas in 2005 and has released over 800 retired military trucks to volunteer fire departments across the state. The agency transports the vehicle from a military installation, performs necessary repairs and delivers it to the volunteer fire department at no cost to them. The program is sponsored by the USDA Forest Service which also oversees the national program.

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

