

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Wayland VFD increases water supply with converted excess military truck

May 17, 2016 — BRECKENRIDGE, Texas — Wayland Volunteer Fire Department received an excess military vehicle through the Department of Defense Firefighter Property Program to convert into a firefighting apparatus. The program is administered by the Texas A&M Forest Service

A refueler in its previous life, the 2008 Oshkosh Defense Heavy Expanded Mobility Tactical Truck M978A4 is a 2,500-gallon tanker known in the military community for its advanced suspension and powerful drivetrain.

“The truck was in great shape when we received it,” Wayland VFD Secretary Brian Rogers said.

Recipients of this program are required to convert the vehicle into a service-ready unit within 180 days of acquisition.

“We painted the cab white and the tank red to match our brush trucks,” Rogers said.

The truck brings increased capabilities to the 140-square-mile service area.

“We can use it as a shuttle truck to refill our R-9 refuelers, it can be used as a tender when we need to access areas our R-9s cannot,” Rogers explained. He also said that, with its high ground clearance, the vehicle can be used during times of flooding to do welfare checks.

Wayland VFD set up training with airmen from Dyess Air Force Base to go over safety, maintenance and operations of the truck as well.

“We want our members to know as much as they can about the vehicle itself,” Rogers said.

Rogers has advice for other fire departments as well.

“The Firefighter Property Program is a great program that all departments big or small should utilize to their advantage, especially if you are working on a limited budget and need to upgrade some of your equipment. You can acquire other trucks such as two-and-a-half and five-ton trucks with very little investment; and now with the added option of a slip-on unit grant that covers 100 percent of the cost of the slip-on, this makes it the best option by far for a majority of the departments out there. It is a win-win for everyone involved.”

The DoD Firefighter Property Program, overseen by the USDA Forest Service, provides excess military equipment to fire departments and emergency service providers. Launched in Texas in 2005, this program has released over 400 retired military trucks to VFDs across the state to help them better protect lives and property. Texas A&M Forest Service picks up the vehicle from a military installation, performs necessary repairs and delivers it to the volunteer fire department at no cost to them.

To learn more about this program and other fire department assistance programs offered by Texas A&M Forest Service, visit <http://texasfd.com>.

