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Whitton Rural VFD increases capabilities with new thermal imaging camera

May 17, 2016 — CANTON, Texas — Whitton Rural Volunteer Fire Department increases their capabilities by purchasing a new thermal imaging camera with an \$11,000 grant from Texas A&M Forest Service.

“This is a first for us. We needed something like this so many times to detect hot spots in structures and aid in search and rescue,” Whitton Rural VFD fire Chief David Fretwell said. “It will also detect body heat if a firefighter is down or if there is a victim in a structure fire and the smoke conceals their location.”

The new camera has already been placed into service and used on a recent call.

“We received a call about smoke around a trailer house. When we arrived, the smoke alarm was going off and the residents weren’t at home, but we used the camera to check the house from the outside of the structure,” Fretwell explained.

Whitton VFD’s response area is about 58 square miles and mostly receives calls for wildland fires. The thermal camera will allow them to detect unseen embers or other hot spots that can linger unobserved for days and then ignite a wildfire. This device will prove to be a vital tool helping the department protect their community.

Texas A&M Forest Service is committed to protecting lives and property through the Rural Volunteer Fire Department Assistance Program, a cost-share program funded by the Texas State Legislature and administered by Texas A&M Forest Service. This program provides funding to rural VFDs for the acquisition of firefighting vehicles, fire and rescue equipment, protective clothing, dry-hydrants, computer systems and firefighter training.

To learn more about this program, visit <http://texasfd.com>.



Thermal Imaging Camera