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May 26, 2016

New rescue equipment expands Abbott VFD's capabilities

May 26, 2016 — ABBOTT, Texas — Abbott Volunteer Fire Department increased their rescue and firefighting capabilities with a \$11,555 grant provided by Texas A&M Forest Service. The department used the grant to purchase a ram, and a combination cutter and spreader, along with necessary accessories such as chargers and batteries.

Texas A&M Forest Service Regional Fire Coordinator Matthew Schlaefer said the equipment is in service and has already been used in a few vehicle rescues.

“This new, lighter equipment takes up less space and is quieter,” said Abbott VFD Chief Bradley Matthys. “It is replacing an older hydraulic generator powered equipment that was heavier and we had to work around the hoses and it was noisy which sometimes frightened the person we were rescuing.”

Chief Matthys is glad to have these increased capabilities for his department. “We have already used [the cutter and spreader] three times for accidents on Interstate 35. When it rains, people don't slow down and they hydroplane, losing control of their vehicle. This new equipment benefits our community and travelers alike.”

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 the fire department assistance programs offered by Texas A&M Forest Service, visit <http://texasfd.com>.

