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Amherst VFD increases potential by adding a military truck to fleet

AMHERST, Texas — Amherst Volunteer Fire Department recently received a retired military vehicle from Texas A&M Forest Service as part of the DoD Firefighter Property Program.

“We were in need of a truck that could fight grass fires,” Fire Chief Bob Mills said. “We serve 85 square miles of primarily ranch and grasslands. Wildfires are the majority of what we respond to.”

The military vehicle is replacing a 35-year-old truck that had become less dependable for the department.

Recipients of this excess property are required to convert the vehicle into a fire-fighting unit within 180 days of acquisition.

“In order to convert the military vehicle into a firefighting one, we had to paint it non-military colors, buy it a new pump- and purchase tanks for it,” Mills said.

The truck can now carry 1,200 gallons of water and pump 350 gallons per minute. The truck’s carrying capacity combined with its four-wheel drive increase the department’s fire suppression capabilities.

The DoD Firefighter Property Program, a program managed nationwide 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 300 retired military trucks to VFDs across the state to help them better protect lives and property.

“If it wasn’t for this program, I don’t know what we would do,” Mills said. “It’s a valuable asset to VFDs and without it many of us could not survive.”

To learn more about this program visit texasfd.com.

