

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### West VFD receives a grant to help purchase a washer-extractor

WEST, Texas – West Volunteer Fire Department accepted a \$9,000 cost share grant to help purchase a specialized washer-extractor that will help maintain their Personal Protective Gear (PPE) or turnout gear. The grant was awarded through the Rural Volunteer Fire Department Assistance Program administered by Texas A&M Forest Service.

Firefighters put their own safety on the line all the time to help protect their communities and fellow firefighters. Modern technology has made it possible for them to take a step towards protecting themselves by having clean turnout gear.

“We are glad to be able to add a heavy-duty washer-extractor to our department equipment, said West VFD Treasurer Pat Grimm. “Having an extractor onsite will allow our gear to be clean of any carcinogens that might be clinging to the gear.”

According to Grimm, previously the turnout gear was sent out to be cleaned which sometimes took two weeks, leaving the department with less gear in service and it also was expensive.

“Having the option to clean gear inhouse is a great alternative,” said Grimm. “The department is grateful to Mayor Muska, City Council, local community, and Texas A&M Forest Service for their support and help in making this addition possible.”

Turnout gear is an investment for each fire department and can mean the difference between adequate protection and injury to a firefighter.

“The new PPE extractor not only properly decontaminates bunker gear, but it makes the gear last longer and clean gear is more visible when out on a response,” said Texas A&M Forest Service Regional Fire Coordinator, Matthew Schlaefer.

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 Texas State Legislature and administered by Texas A&M Forest Service. This program provides funding to rural Volunteer Fire Departments for the acquisition of firefighting vehicles, fire and rescue equipment, protective clothing, dry-hydrants, computer systems and firefighter training.

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

