

McMullen County VFD receives grant for new truck to respond to influx of fires

TILDEN, Texas - With the recent Eagle Ford Shale oil boom, McMullen Volunteer Fire Department has seen a quick rise in both the number of fires they have to fight and the number of people they have to serve on a daily basis.

The shale formation that makes up Eagle Ford is about 12,000 feet down and spans several counties according to TFS Regional Fire Coordinator Craig Olsen. Areas of Texas that have typically had very low population densities are seeing thousands of oil field workers streaming in, bringing with them all of the typical issues surrounding oil field work and fires.

“[McMullen VFD] is right in the heart of the Eagle Ford Shale oil boom,” Olsen said. “Their county has grown exponentially in the span of just two years. Their call volume has gone through the roof since Eagle Ford hit. They sometimes respond to 3-4 fires a week.”

Before receiving a grant in the amount of \$139,500 from Texas A&M Forest Service to purchase a new large brush truck, McMullen VFD used two very old trucks that required constant maintenance. The new truck gives responders several new capabilities to help them fight fires more effectively.

“With the addition of foam we can put more brush fires out and keep them out,” McMullen fire chief Jason Cooper said. “It’s a lot more water than we’ve ever been able to carry. We won’t have to bring in as many trucks or surrounding departments for mutual aid. It lets them stay and service their counties instead of having to help us out.”

TFS passes approximately \$12.8 million along to volunteer fire departments across the state every year, helping them purchase equipment to better protect lives and property.

“TFS provides a wonderful program that gives departments opportunities to get their hands on equipment that they otherwise wouldn’t be able to afford,” Cooper said. “It gives them the ability to purchase essential equipment they need to do their jobs.”



