

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Burton Volunteer Fire Department converts an excess military truck for wildland firefighting

BURTON, Texas – Burton Volunteer Fire Department converted a 2.5-ton military Stewart Stevenson truck into a firefighting apparatus. The department also accepted a slip-on unit grant through the Rural Volunteer Fire Department Assistance Program to help with the conversion. The truck is an excess military vehicle from the Department of Defense Firefighter Property Program (DOD FFP). Both programs are administered by Texas A&M Forest Service.

“Our department appreciates the addition of this rugged apparatus,” said Burton VFD Fire Chief Ronnie Stanley. “It is built to take rough terrain and will allow us to spare the smaller trucks in our fleet from damage when responding to fires in those types of areas.”

According to Stanley, more land is being allowed to return to its natural state so with increased grass growth and a greater fire load, it is extremely valuable to have a wildland apparatus like the Stewart Stevenson.

Seventy percent of the fire service in Texas is filled by volunteer firefighters. This frontline defense protects people and property from wildland fires.

“Volunteer firefighters play a prominent role in rural areas and they are doing so without many of the resources of larger agencies,” said Texas A&M Forest Service Regional Fire Coordinator Justin Graf. “Purchasing and maintaining equipment can be a huge challenge. I am proud to see Burton VFD’s dedication in working to serve and protect its residents. It is a true case of Texans helping Texans.”

The department will receive training on the truck.

“This is a military truck, and it operates differently in a lot of ways, like how it starts and even how the lights are turned on,” said Stanley. “The department members will receive training to become familiar with all of the functions unique to a military vehicle.”

The Burton community stands behind the department.

“We really appreciate the community’s support that helps with gear, equipment, trucks and upkeep,” said Stanley. “When we have special fund raising, there is always great support by our local residents.”

Burton VFD has been serving their area since 1897 and has open enrollment for anyone wishing to volunteer. There are a variety of positions available including auxiliary and firefighting. To apply please text contact information to (979) 451-0179.

Texas A&M Forest Service is committed to protecting lives and property through various fire department assistance programs. The Department of Defense Firefighter Property Program launched in Texas in 2005, is one such program and has released over 800 retired military trucks to Volunteer Fire Departments across the state. The Agency transports the vehicle from a military installation, performs necessary repairs and delivers it to the volunteer fire department at no cost to them. The USDA Forest Service oversees the program nationwide and is the supplier of the excess military equipment to fire departments and emergency service providers.

