

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Cass County ESD #3 adds firefighting power to their fleet with an excess military truck conversion

BLOOMBURG, Texas – As a first line of defense against wildland fires volunteer fire departments play a vital role in the protection of the rural areas of Texas. Cass County ESD #3 enhanced their fleet with a Stewart Stevenson military truck thanks to the Department of Defense Firefighter Property Program that was launched in Texas in 2005 by Texas A&M Forest Service.

“Our department is pleased to add this truck to our fleet,” said Cass County ESD #3 Fire Chief Dakota Huddleston. “We also received a \$20,000 grant through the Texas A&M Forest Service Rural Volunteer Fire Department Assistance Program to help purchase a 1,500-gallon water tank with foam capability. When coupled with the rugged military truck, this allows our department to have a fleet addition that will serve us well.”

The department delivers fire service to a rural area with few fire hydrants.

“The truck has the capability to get into the more rural areas while carrying a large quantity of water that can be released, if necessary, through its ten-inch dump valve into a drop tank, then travel to a pond or dry hydrant, draft more water and continue supplying water at the fire scene,” said Huddleston.

The Stewart Stevenson is now a dual-purpose firefighting machine and was recently used when the department responded to two wildland fires and a hay baler fire.

“Cass County ESD #3 is a strong department supporting a large area in the county,” said Texas A&M Forest Service Regional Fire Coordinator Cody Mayo. “This excess military truck addition will allow the department to respond to multiple types of fires and high-water rescues.”

The Cass County ESD #3 Department has provided fire service for the community and surrounding area since 1974 and has open enrollment for volunteers. An application may be picked up any Monday night at 6:30 p.m. at 210 East Main Street in Bloomburg.

“The truck is in service and ready to perform its new duties,” said Huddleston. “We appreciate the community and local ESD #3 for their support in helping to make the conversion possible and Texas A&M Forest Service for having the military trucks as an option in their grant program.”

The Department of Defense Firefighter Property has released over 800 retired military trucks to volunteer fire departments across the state. Texas A&M Forest Service, an agency operating within the Texas A&M University System, transports the vehicle from a military installation, performs necessary repairs and delivers it to the volunteer fire department at no cost to them. The partnership with the USDA Forest Service, which also sponsors the program, helps fulfill the agencies long standing commitment to protecting lives and property throughout the state of Texas.

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

