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Detroit VFD converts military truck into firefighting machine

May 16, 2016 — DETROIT, Texas — The Detroit Volunteer Fire Department recently received a retired 2005 Stewart and Stevenson M1083A five-ton military cargo truck through the Department of Defense Firefighter Property Program, which is administered by Texas A&M Forest Service.

Recipients of this program are required to convert the received military excess vehicle into a service-ready unit within 180 days of acquisition.

“We had an old duce and a half with a tank prior to this truck,” Chief Roger Holdeman of the Detroit VFD said. “All we had to do was transfer the tank, modify the bumper and mount our pump, valves and paint the body.”

This larger vehicle is an improvement for the department and provides them increased capabilities.

“With our old unit we could never access all the water in the tank so we cut a hole in the bed of this truck and put a sump pump so we can take advantage of all the water,” Holdeman said.

“When responding to calls in rural areas like ours there are times when we need to haul water and this works well in those events. We also put a 6 inch pipe to unload that water in two minutes.”

The truck will be used for wildland and structure fires, as well as a tanker to carry water.

“It has a two-and-a-half inch hose we can use to pull off water and we recently used it for an 18-wheeler fire. We provided mutual aid to three other departments and sometimes get calls for this truck as a tanker,” Holdeman explained.

The DoD Firefighter Property Program, overseen 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 400 retired military trucks to VFDs across the state to help better protect lives and property. Texas A&M Forest Service picks up the vehicle from a military installation, performs necessary repairs and delivers it to the volunteer fire department at no cost to them.

To learn more about this program and other fire department assistance programs offered by Texas A&M Forest Service, visit <http://texasfd.com>.

