

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 16, 2020

### Harmony Consolidated Volunteer Fire Department is helping improve skills with new training tools

GILMER, Texas – Harmony Consolidated Volunteer Fire Department has added firefighting scenario props to their training program to prepare firefighters for whatever their next call requires. The department acquired a forcible entry door and a training mannequin using a cost share grant through the Rural Volunteer Fire Department Assistance Program administered by Texas A&M Forest Service.

“The new training tools will help to increase our knowledge of forcible entry and rescue,” said Harmony Consolidated VFD Fire Chief Shelby Henderson. “It will give a realistic forcible entry training experience for residential and commercial doors.”

The prop will provide firefighters with the ability to pry, force and manipulate the door while practicing technique.

The training mannequin that has an external voice box can be programed to say different phrases and will be used for exercises in search and rescue.

“Training is a critical component to the capacity of a fire department,” said Texas A&M Forest Service Regional Fire Coordinator Josh Bardwell. “Harmony’s procurement of these training aids and time spent practicing with them will enhance their abilities to tackle issues that arise in fire and rescue situations.”

COVID-19 has hampered fund raising.

“We appreciate the opportunity to receive a training equipment grant through Texas A&M Forest Service,” said Henderson. “Our cost share portion was made possible by past fund-raising event participation from our community. We weren’t able to have the Bar-B-Q cook off this year because of COVID but we do appreciate everyone supporting us when possible.”

Harmony Consolidated VFD was established in 1977 and serves a population of 4,000. They currently have open enrollment for anyone wishing to volunteer as a service to the community. For more information visit the departments Facebook page at <https://bit.ly/3gmBztq>.

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>.

