

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### Johnson City VFD receives \$20,000 grant

JOHNSON CITY, Texas — Johnson City Volunteer Fire Department used a cost share grant from the Texas A&M Forest Service Rural Volunteer Fire Department Program to help purchase a slip-on unit that will increase the department's capacity to save lives and property.

A slip-on unit is a complete self-contained firefighting system designed for a pick-up truck or custom-built vehicle platform. It is used in wildland firefighting as well as structure and automobile fires.

“The slip-on unit grant could not have come at a better time,” said Johnson City Volunteer Fire Department Fire Chief Roy Burdett. “We are in the center of a wildland-urban interface and we recently had a 200-acre fire. The twin to this new slip-on unit truck combination stalled and was destroyed in the fire, so receiving this grant is a definite asset to our department.”

The department has a 552-square-mile protection area that is mostly rural and populated by 8,315 residents.

“This slip-on unit will allow our department to have a self-sufficient vehicle when responding to a wildland fire,” said Burdett. “It can actually be multipurpose in that we will be able to respond not only to wildland and structure fires but because of its ability to carry 1,000 gallons of water it can be used as a tender, carrying water to other firefighting vehicles. It also has a 12-gallon foam tank.”

Firefighting foam is important because it is used for fire suppression. It cools the fire and coats the fuel, preventing contact with oxygen and increases the effectiveness of the water. The firefighter spreads a blanket of foam on the area involved, smothering the fire and decreasing the possibility of it reigniting.

“The fires of 2011 were a learning experience for us and proved that these type of firefighting apparatus are very valuable and extremely important in the type of terrain and environment that we have in our area,” said Burdett. “The recent 200-acre fire is an example of how essential this type of apparatus is because we were able to save homes, barns and animals. We are very appreciative for the help from Texas A&M Forest Service and mutual aid from other departments.”

According to Burdett the department received many thank you cards because of their effective response to the fire and received some donations that will go into a fund to replace the destroyed truck.

Johnson City VFD has open enrollment. Anyone wanting to volunteer and commit to giving back to the community call Fire Chief Roy Burdett at (830) 868-7900 for an application.

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>.

