

Van Zandt-Midway Volunteer Fire Department: One grant, one truck, huge difference

BEN WHEELER, Texas – The purchase of a small brush truck is sure to make a huge difference in how the Van Zandt-Midway VFD fights fires and responds to emergencies.

With the help of over \$98,000 in grant money, the Van Zandt-Midway VFD purchased a new fire truck that increases the department's emergency response capabilities.

"There's no way we could have afforded to buy a new truck without the grant from TFS," said Stan Richardson, Van Zandt-Midway VFD chief. "Majority of our trucks were homemade into fire trucks so this way we could actually purchase something that was more reliable."

The new small brush truck replaces two older trucks and serves as both a fire and rescue truck. With easier maneuverability and more space for needed equipment, this could mean the difference between life and death.

"We serve over 2,000 residents and majority of our calls are medical related, followed by grass fires," said Richardson. "Our old trucks would sometimes break down on the way to an emergency, but now we can get to where we're needed more quickly to help save either life or property."

The TFS Rural Volunteer Fire Department Assistance Grant Program is important because VFDs respond to 90 percent of wildfires in Texas. The departments are staffed primarily with volunteers who operate with little to no money.

The Van Zandt-Midway VFD award is among the \$12.8 million passed through TFS to Texas volunteer fire departments each year.



