

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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A military truck conversion increases the capacity of the Speegleville VFD fleet

WACO, Texas — Speegleville Volunteer Fire Department converted a 2.5-ton, 6X6 military truck into a firefighting vehicle. It replaces an older, smaller brush truck with failing equipment. The excess military truck was acquired through the Department of Defense Firefighter Property Program (DoD FFP).

“This truck brings our fleet back up to what it should be,” said Speegleville VFD Assistant Fire Chief Kevin Merritt. “This will be one of the bigger trucks in our county and very useful when assisting with mutual aid.”

The truck has a slip-on unit with an 800-gallon water tank and foam capability which helps cool the fire and coats the fuel, creating greater fire suppression. The slip-on unit was purchased with a \$20,000 grant through the Rural Volunteer Fire Department Assistance Program funded by Texas State Legislature. The funding provides for the acquisition of slip-on units that are installed onto excess military vehicles helping in their conversion into firefighting apparatus.

Both the Rural Volunteer Fire Department Assistance Program and the Department of Defense Firefighter Property Program are administered by Texas A&M Forest Service.

“Our community continues to grow and with that growth comes the need for apparatus to support the fire service needs,” said Merritt. “This truck will be used to respond to grass and structure fires.”

The Department of Defense Firefighter Property Program launched in Texas in 2005, is a program that has released over 600 retired military trucks to volunteer fire departments across the state. The agency transports the vehicle from a military installation, performs necessary repairs and delivers it to the volunteer fire department at no cost to them. The Texas A&M Forest Service excess military equipment program is sponsored by the USDA Forest Service which also oversees the national program.

The dedicated volunteers of the Speegleville VFD have been serving their community since 1969. Fire Chief Jaime Morris and 15 volunteers cover a 42-square-mile service area with a population of 5,150. Anyone wishing to join the volunteers and give back to the community may pick up an application at the department meetings, held the first and third Wednesday of every month at 7 p.m. The meetings are held at the fire station, 139 North Speegleville Road, Waco.

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

