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Thornton VFD gains water capacity with converted military truck

THORNTON, Texas — Thornton Volunteer Fire Department recently filled a void in necessary equipment with a converted military truck from the DoD Firefighter Property Program administered by Texas A&M Forest Service.

“We needed something that could get off the road and carry enough water so we wouldn’t have to come out of the field to refill the tank,” Fire Chief Mike Danz said. “[The converted truck] has a 500-gallon skid unit with a composite tank as well as a 15-gallon foam capability, which is a lifesaver on grass and hay fires.”

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

“The volunteers at Thornton VFD are very appreciative of the truck provided to them,” Regional Fire Coordinator Matthew Schlaefter said. “They had the truck converted per the requirements of the FFP program guidelines in less than a month. They intend to use the truck not only for wildland fire suppression, but structure fires as well.”

According to Danz, the VFD did all of the conversion work themselves, utilizing department volunteers with experience in mechanics and painting.

The DoD Firefighter Property Program provides excess military equipment to fire departments and emergency service providers. Launched in Texas in 2005, this program has released over 300 retired military trucks to VFDs across the state to help them better protect lives and property.

“We will be able to fight the fires longer before having to refill the tank,” Danz said. “The programs that TFS offer are a huge blessing to VFDs like ours. We service about 200 square miles with 90% of our fires being grass fires. This program helped us change from lightweight equipment to this larger tank.”

To learn more about this program visit texasfd.com.

