

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### Winnie Stowell VFD puts new rescue tools into service

**Feb. 10, 2016 — WINNIE, Texas** — Winnie Stowell Volunteer Fire Department purchased new rescue tools with a \$14,800 grant from the Rural VFD Assistance Program, provided by Texas A&M Forest Service.

The tools will greatly increase the department's capabilities to extract victims from motor vehicle accidents, allowing them to get lifesaving medical attention quicker.

“Winnie has grown a lot in the last 20 years and the growth of new businesses and increased population has caused a greater need for rescue tools,” said Winnie Stowell VFD Fire Chief Lenard Bettis. “Our town is located along Interstate 10 between Houston and Beaumont and we get a lot of traffic which means more vehicle accidents.”

The traffic includes local residents, fishermen, beach goers and bird watchers who frequent the town. Recently, the new equipment helped rescue a traveler from a mangled vehicle – quickly freeing the victim.

“The equipment replaced an aging pair of hydraulic Hurst spreaders” said Jeremy Wagner, Texas A&M Forest Service, RFC. “These tools will greatly add to the department's capacity to serve their community and neighboring communities as well.”

Volunteer firefighters operate 85 percent of the fire departments in Texas. This year Texas A&M Forest Service will pass approximately \$24.3 million to VFDs across the state. The grants aid them in purchasing equipment and obtaining vital firefighter training, giving them greater capabilities to protect life and property in their communities.

To learn more about this program visit [texasfd.com](http://texasfd.com).



Winnie Stowell VFD Fire Chief Lenard Bettis and Jeremy Wagner, Texas A&M Forest Service, RFC