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Richland Springs Volunteer Fire Department prepares for fire season with new tool

RICHLAND SPRINGS, Texas – Richland Springs Volunteer Fire Department received a cost share grant through the Texas A&M Forest Service Rural Volunteer Fire Department Assistance Program. The \$6,000 grant and donations from the community made the purchase of a new front bumper water monitor possible.

“Our community is very supportive,” said Fire Chief Jeffery Bates. “I like to say that the department belongs to the community and the firefighters are just here to make sure it works, protecting not only our community but the rural areas around us.”

According to Bates 75 percent of their calls are grass/wildland related fires and the remote, easy to use monitor will help to increase the department’s capacity when fighting those types of fires.

“Most of our calls are for fires sparked by farming equipment or travelers driving US 190,” said Bates. “Sometimes it’s just someone trying to drive with a flat tire, throwing sparks into the grass every few feet.”

The monitor has 360 degree capability, and can stream water 50 to 60 feet with the option of different water patterns that can be set remotely from inside the cab. The apparatus has been tested and is ready for service.

“The 12-volt monitor is the perfect addition to the department’s firefighting tools,” said Texas A&M Forest Service Regional Fire Coordinator Matthew Schlaefer. “It will give them more of an advantage when there is minimal staffing availability and also provides protection to personnel by allowing the firefighter to work from a safe distance.”

Richland Springs VFD has served their area since 1935. They currently have open enrollment for those who would like to give back to the community. An application may be picked up at the fire department located at 303 Carter Street in Richland Springs during their business meetings held at 7 p.m. the first and third Monday of every month.

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>.

