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Retired military truck gets new lease on life with City of Dumas FD

April 14, 2016 — DUMAS, Texas — With a new coat of paint and some feature conversions by the City Dumas Fire Department has repurposed a tanker military truck into a new fire response vehicle.

The City of Dumas FD received the military cargo truck through the Department of Defense Firefighter Property Program, which puts retired military vehicles into the hands of volunteer fire departments. The 1986 Oshkosh M978 military tanker truck was stripped of its camouflage paint and fuel pumping system and outfitted with fire equipment, including new piping and dump valves.

“We have an 18-wheel truck that we use as our water supply but it is hard to get off the road to wildland fires,” explained Chief Paul Jenkins of the City of Dumas VFD. “Since this truck is a lot smaller, it will be used to shuttle water to the attack vehicles for grass and wildland fires.”

The truck has four-wheel drive, power steering and an automatic transmission. It is expected to bring better safety and efficiency to the department as a multi-purpose unit.

“It has a 2500-gallon tank making it a useful water source for wildland fires and structure fires,” said Chief Jenkins.

Launched in Texas in 2005, the U.S. Forest Service and Texas A&M Forest Service administer the no-cost program that transfers the military property.

Texas A&M Forest Service picks up the vehicles from military bases around the country and their in-house mechanics inspect the vehicles for any major issues. Once the department obtains the title to the vehicle, it is theirs and they must use local funds for converting it for firefighting use and maintenance. Fundraising and donations are important to helping the departments make these changes and repairs.

For more information on this and other fire department assistance programs offered by Texas A&M Forest Service, visit <http://texasfd.com>.

