

Volunteer Fire Department FEPP Program Success

Stanley, IA Sees Success in the FEPP Program

The Challenge

Many rural communities served by the US Forest Service's Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry (NA) struggle to train and equip firefighters in addition to provide adequate firefighting vehicles in their fire stations. Volunteer fire departments (VFDs) face ever increasing costs to purchase vehicles and equipment and rely on limited tax funds and fundraising to try to meet their needs. Stanley is a small town (population: 125) in northeastern Iowa which needs to keep their all-volunteer fire department equipped and trained for both structural and rural firefighting.

The Solution:

The Federal Excess Personal Property (FEPP) Program, is a federal program that is administered by NA through the State forestry agencies. The agencies are able to acquire excess military property and provide it to VFDs on permanent loan. Title to vehicles remains with the federal government. Vehicles and equipment can be upgraded to meet the needs of the local fire departments.

The small community of Stanley has utilized the FEPP program to its advantage. The VFD was in need of a tanker truck for hauling water to both structural and wildland fires. A military dump truck with low mileage was being excessed by the Air Force in Minnesota. The Iowa Forest Service acquired the truck and the town arranged for its transport to Stanley. Members of the community and fire department used fire department funds to convert the dump truck into a tanker. The 600 gallon water tank was also acquired through the FEPP program. A grant from the Iowa Forest Service provided the water pump for the tank. Additional grants from the local health department and the Department of Homeland Security provided other equipment for the tanker.

Stanley has recently acquired commercial fitness equipment that will be used to improve the fitness of its firefighters. The federal government recently highlighted that heart attacks are a leading cause of death for firefighters and allows the acquisition of fitness equipment within the program.

Fire and Aviation Management

The Federal Excess Personal Property Program provides valuable assistance to state forestry agencies and communities by providing the permanent loan of useable government surplus vehicles and equipment.



Before and after photos of an excessed US Air Force dump truck that was converted into a tanker truck by the town of Stanley, IA. Photo courtesy Iowa Forest Service

Benefits:

Through the Federal Excess Personal Property Program, useable government equipment and vehicles are available to communities that will greatly benefit from it. Stanley has been able to obtain vehicles and equipment worth more than \$3 million that it would not have otherwise been able to acquire on its annual fire department budget of approximately \$12,000. The community has also been assisting other towns in Iowa in the acquisition of vehicles and equipment.

Sharing Successes:

Other communities throughout Iowa and NA benefit from this program every day. In 2006 the FEPP loaned property worth more than \$12 million to communities and state forestry agencies throughout NA.

For more information, contact:

Kathryn P. Maloney, Area Director
11 Campus Blvd., Suite 200
Newtown Square, PA 19073
Phone: 610-557-4103
E-mail: kmaloney@fs.fed.us

Billy Terry, Assistant Director
11 Campus Blvd., Suite 200
Newtown Square, PA 19073
Phone: 610-557-4145
E-mail: bterry@fs.fed.us



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State and Private Forestry

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