

The Bandera PROPHEET

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LCRA, Bandera Electric Co-op award \$19,998 grant to Pipe Creek firefighters

A \$19,998 grant from the Lower Colorado River Authority and Bandera Electric Cooperative will help the Pipe Creek Volunteer Fire Department purchase a much-needed all-terrain vehicle and vertical rescue equipment.

The Community Development Partnership Program grant, along with \$5,000 in matching funds, will allow the department to buy an ATV for rescue and fire operations in remote areas larger rescue vehicles cannot access. The ATV will serve multiple roles by acting as an incident command vehicle at grass and brush fires, as well as transporting personnel and equipment to difficult-to-reach areas.

The grant also will help purchase vertical rescue equipment for use in the region's rugged countryside.

"The money will help update technical rescue equipment to cover our service area," Fire Chief Brandon Lee said. "Given the large number of bluffs in our area, it will also improve our capability to respond to emergencies."

Lee said the ATV will be a new asset to the department, but the rescue equipment will replace high-angle gear that is about 20 years old.

Pipe Creek VFD covers a service area of 75 square miles in southeast Bandera County, which includes the community of Pipe Creek. The department also has mutual aid agreements throughout Bandera County and portions of Medina, Bexar and Kendall counties.

The need for the new equipment and ATV is accelerated by the donation of more than 3,000 acres to the state of Texas for the creation of a state natural area from the estate of Albert and Bessie Kronkowsky. Pipe Creek VFD will respond to calls in the area.

"It's great that we got the grant to make these purchases instead of

having to use donations that go toward our day-to-day operations,” Lee said. “Without it, it might have taken us a couple of years to get the ATV and rescue equipment.”

The community grant is one of 28 grants awarded recently through LCRA’s Community Development Partnership Program, which provides economic development and community assistance grants to cities, counties, volunteer fire departments, regional development councils and other nonprofit organizations in LCRA’s wholesale electric and water service areas. The program is part of LCRA’s effort to give back to the communities it serves. Bandera Electric Cooperative is one of LCRA’s wholesale electric customers and a partner in the grant program.

Applications for the next round of grants will be accepted July 1-31.

More information is available at lcra.org/cdpp.