



NEWS RELEASE

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(Hillsboro Firefighters Say Goodbye to Ladder Truck)

Hillsboro firefighters said goodbye Friday to a long-time companion, a 1976 Seagraves ladder truck. Hillsboro Fire Department has donated the truck to the Canyonville Fire Department to enable that southwest Oregon town to better protect its lumber mills.

“We’re happy to help out another Oregon fire department,” said Hillsboro Fire Chief Gary Seidel. “We know that the timber industry decline has made it difficult for some departments to afford to purchase new apparatus.”

Hillsboro Fire Battalion Chief Terry Lindauer and Firefighter Ted Whiteman climbed aboard the yellow and white truck for its 200 mile trip to Canyonville early Friday morning. The diesel-powered truck can only cruise a little over 50-miles per hour on the freeway.

The 100-foot ladder atop the 33-year old truck passes current safety tests, but lacks the capacity considered essential for modern firefighting and rescue procedures in a city that has numerous multi-story buildings and high tech manufacturing plants. The ladder has only a 250-pound capacity at its tip when fully extended. That’s compared with 500-pound capacity for Hillsboro’s new tiller truck ladder purchased last year and the 1,000-pound capacity of the Department’s 2000-model platform truck.

Canyonville is getting a low-mileage vehicle in the deal, too. “The truck has only about 50,000 miles on it,” said Battalion Chief Lindauer. “While it was our front line ladder truck for many years, we didn’t have it staffed.” Lindauer said that meant it was taken along only when fires required a ladder truck. Hillsboro Fire Department added personnel in 2000 to enable full-time staffing of a ladder truck, which responds to all working fires and to medical and rescue calls, as well. Since that time, the 76-Seagraves has served as a reserve apparatus and was used only when the front line apparatus was in the shop for repairs. The 2000-model platform truck will now be the Department’s reserve ladder truck and the 2008-model tiller truck is the Department’s front-line ladder truck.

The 76-model Seagraves cost approximately \$69,000 when new. It would bring a fraction of that on the used apparatus market.

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Hillsboro Fire Department Engineer Brad Lepley checks the air in the tires of the agency's 1976 Seagraves ladder truck that is being donated to the Canyonville Fire Department. Lepley joined the fire department the same year the truck was purchased.