

*Narrative Statement of the
Colman Volunteer Fire and Rescue Department*

Project Description

The Colman Volunteer Fire and Rescue Department is seeking funds for the purchase of a new NFPA compliant tanker apparatus unit. A brief description of the tanker is as follows:

- ❑ Galvanneal Apparatus Body
- ❑ 1800 Gallon Poly Tank
- ❑ 500 GPM PTO Pump (pump and roll capable)
- ❑ 2 Door Commercial Chassis

This truck will be used as our primary source of water for fighting rural fires and will also respond to all of our different types of emergencies. It will be used to store our portable folding tank in a drop down style carrier making it much safer for our firefighters to load and unload it. We would have storage space available to carry SCBA's for the crew of this unit and store other important equipment in a well-organized, easy-to-use, reliable and efficient way. This would maximize the capabilities of our firefighters and minimize the risks that they are exposed to by operating our existing out of date tanker.

The total amount we are requesting in the Firefighting Vehicle Acquisition Program is \$131,750. The federal share would be \$125,163 and the applicant share would be \$6,587. The grant funds would be used for the sole purpose of purchasing a vitally needed tanker apparatus unit, as described above. We have carefully studied the needs of our community and fire department and found that this is our number one need at the current time. We have written a detailed set of specifications for this truck to ensure that it will meet all our needs and NFPA standards.

Financial Need

This project cannot be funded locally due to the fact that our budget is limited to covering the normal day to day department needs. Over two-thirds of our department funding is self-generated. We have an existing truck fund that will be used for the 5% match but will never be enough to purchase a new truck. We have looked into a 10-year lease purchase option for a new truck but the annual payments exceed our current budget. Our tax base revenue is currently in a tax freeze in the State of South Dakota and there are no state grants available. We have explored every possible option to purchase a new truck and it is simply not possible without the help of this grant program.

Cost / Benefit

The Colman Volunteer Fire and Rescue Department is located in a rural community in Eastern South Dakota. The department protects the City of Colman and the surrounding townships, which is largely an urban interface area. The department covers approximately 110 square miles. The last new fire truck the department purchased was in 1972. The tanker that would be replaced is a 1977 milk truck that was never designed for use in the fire service. This unit currently has over 219,000 miles and is in need of many repairs. This 28-year-old tanker is not NFPA compliant, does not have usable seat belts, the compartments are rusted through, it has wooden baffles that need replacing and it only has a rear 6" dump with a butterfly valve. One of the greatest safety risks to our firefighters is climbing on top of this elliptical tank to load it with water, usually in marginal conditions. Being located in South Dakota we are often faced with

severe weather and can have up to 6 months of snow and ice. Another safety risk includes loading and unloading the portable dump tank without the use of a drop down tank carrier. This task requires a minimum of 4 firefighters to hold this 400 pound piece of equipment over their head. Perhaps the greatest safety risk with the existing apparatus is operating this overloaded vehicle with minimal braking capabilities. The proposed apparatus would have a rear direct tank fill and a drop down folding tank carrier, which would allow our firefighters to remain on the ground minimizing the risk of injuries.

The average age of our fleet is over 20 years. With the new Annex D recommendations, this would be a great place to start improving our fleet both in age and safety features!

The Colman Volunteer Fire and Rescue Department consists of 25 volunteer firefighters. Most of these firefighters are also EMT's or First Responders. We respond to an average of 80 calls per year. These calls consist of structure fires, car fires, grass fires, car accidents, haz-mat and a variety of medical emergencies.

We are located in a diverse and growing community and must cover an ever-increasing variety of emergency situations. Our coverage area includes two large electrical transformer manufacturing plants, one of which has no hydrant system. It also includes coverage of the largest rural electric coop in South Dakota and a hazardous waste storage facility that is capable of holding over 100,000 gallons of PCB contaminated waste oil. Together these four facilities employ over 300 people. A new high school has recently been constructed. We also cover 18 miles of Interstate 29 and several miles of Highway 34 that runs through our community and is the busiest 2-lane state highway in South Dakota. We are located within 7 miles of an ethanol plant and

would provide second response in case of an emergency. This ethanol plant is currently producing over 40 million gallons per year and has caused a great increase in traffic through our community, by both highway and railway. We also provide mutual aid to 8 surrounding departments on a regular basis. This new tanker would not only allow us to meet the challenges of our growing community but would greatly benefit the surrounding communities as well.

Statement of Effect

Our department has gotten used to being self sufficient, by not only doing our own maintenance, but has even constructed some of our existing apparatus. We are not seeking funding for an apparatus loaded with unnecessary bells and whistles but simply a basic tanker that can do the job and serve the best interest of our community and department in a safe and efficient manner.

This opportunity for funding that you may provide could be a great benefit to the Colman Volunteer Fire and Rescue Department, it's citizens, and the communities around us. We thank you for the chance to apply for this vital and needed piece of equipment that we would not have a chance to purchase otherwise. We have looked carefully and evaluated all of the needs within our department and have placed this vehicle as the one purchase that would make the most important difference in our ability to provide highly effective emergency service, maintain safety for our personnel, and would be the most beneficial to the most people. Thank you again for your time and consideration in this matter.

Colman Fire and Rescue Department
Colman, South Dakota