Press Release

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Fort Drum Public Affairs

New fire engine enhances Fort Drum firefighting capabilities

FORT DRUM, N.Y. -- Not long after its arrival at Fire Station 2 on the morning of March 15, Fort Drum firefighters eagerly christened their new fire engine with buckets of soapy water, scrub brushes and pressurized hoses.

It seemed like the entire crew wanted to get hands on Engine 2, as they talked about what the additional apparatus means to their organization.

“It’s definitely a morale-booster,” said Fire Capt. David Kuhl. “These guys are going want to tinker on it and clean it every day.”

Firefighter Timothy Newman compared it to getting a new car and wanting to test out all the new features.

“Whenever we get new equipment, people get excited,” said Firefighter Timothy Newman. “You feel really good about coming to work and excited to work with new equipment.”

The 2021 Pierce Saber engine features a 1,500 gallon-per-minute pump and six-person cab.

Newman said that the apparatus meets the new National Fire Protection Association requirements, and it has more safety options than older models.

“It has back-up cameras on each side so, while we’re driving, we have a greater capability of seeing left and right,” he said. “Also, with the new style of cab design it has a full windshield for better visibility and the new lighting system on it is top-of-the-line.”

Kuhl, a 23-year veteran with Fort Drum Fire and Emergency Services, said that this will be the first brand-new apparatus, and not a refurbished one, he has worked with since he started.

“This is going to enhance our capabilities and will be reliable for a number of years,” he said. “It is going to allow us to put all of my crew into one vehicle, so that’s going to improve communications.”

It will also eliminate the need of sending out two vehicles to respond to a call.

“This new engine is going to provide crew continuity because we can have six firefighters in one vehicle, and we’re not going to have the wear-and-tear of sending two apparatus to the scene,” said Fort Drum Fire Chief Jason Brunet. “It going to get us to the scene quicker, safer and more efficiently.”

Brunet said that six apparatus were taken out of service in 2019 because of frame rot and structural issues. About this time last year, Fort Drum Fire and Emergency Service received a refurbished fire engine under the Service Life Extension Program (SLEP), and the staff expects to receive another new engine by March 2022. Brunet said that a small aircraft rescue firefighting apparatus also will be added to the fleet next year.

“This new fire engine gets us back to where we need to be,” he said. “Our firefighters are going to be more efficient, our community should feel safer and that’s what it’s all about.”

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CUTLINES:

Photos 2 and 4: Fort Drum firefighters wash the new fire engine at Fire Station 2 on March 15. The apparatus features a 1,500 gallon-per-minute pump and six-person cab, which will enhance the capabilities of firefighters responding to an emergency. (Photo by Mike Strasser, Fort Drum Garrison Public Affairs)

Photo 6: Capt. David Kuhl, Firefighter Timothy Newman, Firefighter David Egan, Firefighter Joseph Chaisson, all with Fort Drum Fire Station 2, stand in front of the new fire engine on March 15. (Photo by Mike Strasser, Fort Drum Garrison Public Affairs)