

Park Distributes RFA Funding Lyndon B. Johnson National Historic Site National Fire Plan – Community Assistance

For the fourth year in a row, the Johnson City and the Stonewall Volunteer Fire Departments (VFDs) have been awarded funding to improve their firefighting capabilities via the Department of the Interior's Rural Fire Assistance program (RFA). Lyndon B. Johnson National Historical Park has mutual aid agreements with these fire departments that protect local citizens as well as out of town visitors.



Essential equipment and useful training for local fire department personnel have once again been secured by virtue of this Federal program.

Earlier in the year, both volunteer fire departments were able, through funding sources of their own, to purchase modern water tankers as replacements for aging vehicles. Tankers are used to transport water to the scene of a blaze. The Rural Fire Assistance program then provided monies for each department to equip their new tankers. Johnson City VFD bought a 2000 gallon Fold-A-Tank. Similar to a portable swimming pool, this equipment provides a water source that fire engines can draft from or that a floating pump can use as a water source. Stonewall VFD identified a need involving hose nozzles and fittings for their new tanker, purchases that completely absorbed their RFA allotment this year.

Other purchases by the Johnson City VFD include supplemental items for their foam units (which can be used for both wild land and structural fires) and personal protective equipment such as face shields and fire shelters. Funding for basic wild land fire training was also made available.

The local national park unit benefits from these purchases as well. Unlike larger parks that have many firefighting staff, the Lyndon B. Johnson National Historical Park fire program is much smaller and must rely on nearby fire departments for backup. "The Rural Fire Assistance program has definitely improved firefighting capabilities in dealing with both structural and wild land fire in our communities," stated Drew Gilmour, park Fire Management Officer. "The fact that our local fire departments stand ready to aid the park in protecting the resources in our care makes this a valuable and mutually beneficial program for everyone involved."

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