



KCFR pushes engines into service

BRIAN WALKER/Staff Writer | Posted: Saturday, February 13, 2016 12:00 am

Kootenai County Fire and Rescue kept to fire department tradition by recently pushing three new engines into service.

Board and staff members pushed in new engines at stations on Idaho Street and 16th Avenue in Post Falls and on Ramsey Road in Coeur d'Alene.

"The history and tradition related to pushing a new truck into the bay hails from the day when fire apparatus were horse-drawn," said KCFR Chief Warren Merritt.

"It was difficult at best for the old steam or hand pumper to be backed into the apparatus bay by a team of horses so it was often pushed in by the firefighters. It was not uncommon for the community to be involved in the days when the fire station was often a center of activity as they were staffed by an all-volunteer force."

The engines replace ones that have been in service since the early 1990s. The cost for the engines was nearly \$500,000 for each.

"They were paid for with money the district had saved for apparatus replacements, so we didn't have to borrow money or raise taxes to fund them," Merritt said.

The new engines are better suited for medical calls.

"Since the older engines went into service, the fire department has gotten more involved in medical calls," Merritt said.

Two of the older engines will be sold at surplus while the third is being kept as a reserve.

Merritt called the engines the "workhorse" for the fire district. They will will serve citizens for at least the next 15 years.

KCFR covers Post Falls, Huetter, Stateline, Dalton Gardens, Fernan Village and Wolf Lodge.