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## **Pa. Volunteer Fire Company Purchases Replacement Apparatus**

By Ed Ballam

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Old Lycoming Township, Pa., Volunteer Fire Company spent two years developing specifications for its new first-due pumper — a 2009 Pierce PUC, which stands for Pierce Ultimate Configuration.

"We wanted a truck that was shorter, but could hold more, and that's what we got," said Old Lycoming Fire Chief David Shirn Jr. "The new Pierce PUC is two feet shorter, has a shorter wheel base, but has more cubic feet. In fact, we got a third more space than what we had before."

Other important factors in developing the specifications, according to Old Lycoming officials, were firefighter safety and a desire for a compressed air foam system (CAFS).

Shirn said his department was one of the first dozen or so to purchase the PUC, which was introduced by Pierce in 2007 at the Fire Department Instructors Conference in Indianapolis, Ind.

"One of our guys went to FDIC to look at it and he brought back all kinds of information," Shirn said, noting the department had been alerted about the innovative design and its members were intrigued.

Pierce placed the PUC's pump under the cab, below the rear passengers, to reduce and redistribute the space required for the pump and controls. After the pumper was unveiled at the show, the dealer who later sold the apparatus to Old Lycoming sent one to the station for members to check out.

Shirn said the dealership, Tyler Fire Equipment, is an hour and a half away in Elmira, N.Y., which was an important factor in the decision to purchase the \$680,000 Pierce.

"We try to buy local stuff, and we buy good stuff too," Shirn said, noting the PUC replaces two Saulsbury trucks, a pumper and a rescue unit. Saulsbury apparatus were considered top-of-the-line when new and continue to command high resale prices.

"We're moving toward becoming an all Pierce department," Shirn said, noting Old Lycoming has a 2004 Pierce pumper in the fleet. The department has a firefighting alliance — sharing station space, personnel and equipment — with the Williamsport (Pa.) Bureau of Fire, an all-Pierce department.

Old Lycoming officials decided to purchase a Pierce Arrow XT cab because it came equipped with frontal impact airbags and side roll protection along with electronic stability control.

"Firefighter safety was one of our primary design objectives," said Tim Shumbat, the apparatus committee chairman. He said the stability control works through a series of sensors tied to onboard computers that apply braking and throttle controls should the truck approach pre-determined safety limits.

The design of the Pierce PUC permits pump and roll capabilities and the department had the opportunity to use that feature during its first six months of service. The apparatus was dispatched to a car fire, according to Shirn, and the crew was able to knock the fire down using a front bumper-mounted TFT monitor with a joystick controller in the cab while rolling up to the scene.

The apparatus also has a compressed air foam system, a feature with which the chief said he is most pleased. He said the knockdown power of CAFS is unparalleled and he can't imagine running any more apparatus without it.

### Investing In CAFS

"It's the latest technology available," he said. "We didn't think we should make that kind of an investment in an apparatus that's going to be around for years without putting CAFS on it."

Shirn said the Pierce PUC was second due on calls for a while to give his 30 or so active firefighters time to learn the nuances of CAFS.

"We wanted everyone to be very familiar with it before we really start fighting fire with it," he said. The department's 2004 Pierce pumper and a 1996 Saulsbury/Spartan pumper were the primary firefighting apparatus during the training period.

The 2009 Pierce pumper is equipped with an unusual six-inch rear intake. Shirn said his fire district has a number of high-pressure hydrants, and for the safety of the pump operator and others surrounding the area the intake was designated at the rear to keep the high-pressure hose away from them.

To make the most of the PUC's space saving design, Old Lycoming specified the new pumper with roll-out shelves and trays for tool storage. A rear compartment houses ladders and long tools.

"We thought we were going to have so much more space when we got this apparatus, but like every other department, we managed to fill it up," Shirn said. Nevertheless, he said, members still got more equipment on board than they expected.

Dealing with Pierce was a pleasure, he said, and made easy by James Broyles, the salesman from Tyler Fire Equipment.

"Jim didn't miss anything," said Shirn, a truck salesman himself. "It was a real pleasure working with him."

Shirn, who has 27 years in the fire service, also had praise for Pierce. When the apparatus was delivered, there was an issue with the unit's engine, and he said it was resolved in a couple of days.

### **2009 Pierce Arrow XT PUC Pumper**

#### Chassis

- Pierce Arrow XT cab and chassis with seating for five and an EMS cabinet
- Caterpillar C13 485-hp engine
- Allison Gen IV 4000EVS transmission
- Electronic Stability Control
- Jacobs engine brake

#### Pumping Features

- Pierce PUC 1,500-gpm pump
- Compressed Air Foam System Pierce/Darley
- 30-gallon Class A foam cell
- 45-gallon Class B foam cell
- 759-gallon water tank
- Rear 6-inch intake
- 500-gallon TFT monitor on the front bumper
- TFT Blitzfire preconnected in the back
- Pump-and-roll capability
- 1 3/4-inch discharge in the front pumper

#### Other Features

- Stainless steel body with roll-up doors
- Diesel-powered Westerbeke Corp. 20,000-watt generator
- Hurst Trimo electric-powered hydraulic extrication system
- Pre-connected Hurst Omni tools
- 12,000-pound Warn winch in the front bumper
- Code 3 LED warning lights
- Will-Burt 6,000-watt light tower
- Havis-Shields scene lights
- Pedestal-mounted laptop computer in the cab with satellite Internet
- Federal Q siren
- Roto Ray warning light