

# New Second Pieces for Squads and Haz-Mat Engines

By Battalion Chief John A. Calderone



PHOTOS BY BATTALION CHIEF JOHN A. CALDERONE

**Squad 288.** The seven squad companies are being assigned Ferrara rigs built on two-door, 2015 Freightliner chassis as their second pieces.

During the mid-1990s, the steadily growing number of hazardous materials incidents taking place often resulted in Haz-Mat 1 being committed, while several other simultaneous responses occurred, with no haz-mat capability to respond to them. It became necessary to have strategically located units that are properly trained and equipped to handle simultaneous haz-mat events.

During 1996, Engine 41, Squad 1 and Rescue 5 were designated as Hazardous Materials Support Units. The members of these units received extensive haz-mat mitigation and decontamination training to the technician level. They were trained in the selection and use of chemical protective clothing, haz-mat control and air-monitoring equipment, decontamination procedures and mitigation of leaks, spills and other releases. Each of these units was assigned a second apparatus to carry their haz-mat mitigation equipment.

This equipment includes decontamination pool and supplies, chemical protective

suits, grounding and bonding cables, non-sparking tools, resource books, over-pack drums, drum cart, an assortment of gloves and boots, air hose and regulator, fuel transfer pump, wedges, pails, tape, an assortment of portable extinguishers, sampling tubes, brooms, squeegees, shovels, meters, binoculars, leak sealing kit, funnels and other assorted mitigation equipment. Also carried are supplies of absorbent booms and pads, speedy dry, bio-solve and soda ash.

Engines 23 and 288 similarly were trained and equipped and designated Haz-Mat Support Units on March 24, 1998. When the Department decided to increase the number of squad companies in service, a decision was made to train and equip these units to the technician level as well. Engine Companies 18, 61, 252, 270 and 288 were designated squad companies on July 1, 1998, and Engine 41 followed the next day.

On August 1, 1998, all seven squad companies and Rescue 5 were designated Hazardous Materials Technician Units

and their second pieces were designated Haz-Mat Tenders. The term, Haz-Mat Support Unit, no longer was used and Engine 23—originally slated to become a squad company—was removed from this program as well.

The initial haz-mat tenders were either step van delivery-style trucks or utility trucks similar to a mechanic's truck. Following the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001, it was decided to add additional hazardous materials capabilities. Engines 44, 165 and 274 were trained and equipped to the technician level, designated Haz-Mat Technician Units, and assigned haz-mat tenders on June 7, 2004. Engine 250 followed on May 1, 2005.

New haz-mat tenders, step vans with a standardized configuration and carrying the same complement of equipment, were acquired and placed into service.

During the ensuing years, additional haz-mat equipment has been added to the haz-mat tenders. Simultaneously, the



**HMTU.** The four haz-mat engines—Engine Companies 44, 165, 250 and 274—are being assigned larger, custom-built, 2015 Ferrara haz-mat technician unit apparatus, equipped with generators, air compressors, light towers and command/resource areas inside the crew cab.

**Engine 44.** All of the Haz-Mat Technician Units—both squads and haz-mat engines—had been operating step vans as their haz-mat tenders.



squad companies also have been assigned additional SOC-related equipment. The existing haz-mat tenders had reached the end of their useful life in both age and carrying capabilities.

While both types of units—the haz-mat engines and squads—are Haz-Mat Technician Units, each has diverse needs to fulfill all of their missions. A decision was made to replace the step vans with two distinct types of vehicles, specifically tailored to the functions of each type unit.

The haz-mat engines are being assigned

haz-mat tenders built on custom 2015 Ferrara chassis. They have four-door cabs and rescue-style bodies, with roll-up compartment doors. Each also is equipped with a 20 kW generator, 200 cfm air compressor and roof-mounted light tower. There is a Command Post/resource area located in the crew cab.

Each squad company is being assigned a shorter, rescue-style apparatus built by Ferrara on two-door, 2015 Freightliner M2 chassis with standard compartment door configuration. ■

#### About the Author:



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