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A chassis is the base frame for the engine, or structure of the engine. The old Engine 1 was built on an International chassis, whereas the new framework is a Kenworth.

According to Chief Dyer, the new fire truck has been an expected need for the department over the last year. The old engine was aging, creeping up in mileage and had become a mechanical liability in the last few years.

"It's just normal that, if you have a fire truck for a long time, then you're going to have a lot of problems after a while," said Chief Dyer. "So, it's definitely a big boost. We need some engines. Our fleet is a very aging fleet. The average age for one of our trucks is about 21, 22 years old.

"We need a very reliable, safe - safety is a big issue—engine at this fire station because we run just about every call there is in Union County, and we run all fire calls, of course. "It's a big morale booster for all the guys up here, too, to get new equipment. It's something that we need to purchase every so often so that we can keep our fleet up to date and so we can keep the safety features up."

The truck was funded

with SPLOST money and cost approximately \$350,000, including the expense for the new equipment needed to outfit the engine. At the push-in, Union County Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris shared his gratitude for the community's support of the voter-approved SPLOST that has made the improvements to the fire department over the last few years possible.

"I'm just so proud that we're able to purchase something like this," said Commissioner Paris. "It's a very good engine, as good as you can get. Our citizens here are covered as good as or better than anywhere with this equipment, and of course, being here with this new fire station.

"We just feel blessed that people have supported SPLOST and that we're able to use the funds for a lot of different reasons, not only for paving roads. This is one of the key areas where it's needed because public safety is really a No. 1 for everybody in the county. "Without public safety, you don't have much, so we have to take care of that. We really do have great equipment and some of the best trained firemen around."



Firefighters at Union County Fire Station No. 1 welcomed their new engine to the fleet with a traditional push-in, where they pushed it into the station.



Fire Chief David Dyer shows off the new gear on the newly minted Engine 1.