

## Airport Rescue Vehicle Becomes Permanent At GXY

Maybe you have heard it on the Unicom frequency but were not sure exactly what it was. Maybe you have seen it before but were not sure where it came from or how it got here. Maybe you knew all this already, but wondered how in the world the airport was able to pay for it. It's "Rescue 9", a dedicated Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting (ARFF) vehicle which has been standing watch at the Greeley-Weld County Airport for the past few years on a temporary loan basis. When it came to GXY, it joined "Rescue 8", a smaller ARFF vehicle already owned by the airport, and purchased surplus from Denver International Airport in 2001.



Although Rescue 8 has served the airport well, an unfortunate accident in 2002 made it clear that more ARFF resources were needed on the airport in the event of an accident involving a mid-sized or larger corporate aircraft. The solution... the State of Colorado's ARFF training truck!

In the mid 1990's, because of difficulties Colorado airports were having in maintaining training and certification for their ARFF personnel, the Colorado Aeronautics Division purchased the E-One Titan and based it in the Denver area primarily for annual airport personnel training needs. It became apparent however after a few years, that the trucks use for only 2-3 months out of the year created long term maintenance problems, when the truck sat idle and unused for the remainder of the year. Ultimately, the staff of the Greeley-Weld County Airport was able to talk the Colorado Aeronautics Division into basing the large ARFF truck at GXY during the non-training season. This provided the airport with a significantly enhanced aircraft firefighting ability, and in return, the truck was being properly maintained and taken care of during the off training season. For 2 months each summer, the truck would be relocated to the Denver International Airport ARFF training center. Over the past three years however, it became apparent that the State needed a larger more up to date ARFF vehicle for training purposes, and a project was undertaken between the State and DIA to fund and acquire a replacement for the current vehicle. Airport staff kept their foot stuck in the door during this process however, and ensured that when the new vehicle was finally delivered earlier in 2009, that the existing ARFF truck was disposed of by the State by transferring ownership to the Greeley-Weld County Airport Authority. This transfer of ownership finally took place during the month of August, and the airport now owns the truck outright.

The E-One Titan has unique capabilities not found on any other fire truck located in the City of Greeley. It carries 1,000 gallons of water, which is more than any other fire truck in the City. It also carries 130 gallons of concentrated firefighting foam, which, when mixed with water, will produce 4,000 gallons of foam. This is almost three times what is carried by other fire trucks serving the area. Finally, it carries 500 lbs. of dry chemical extinguishing agent as well.

The Greeley-Weld County Airport has five employees on staff who are fully ARFF trained and certified by the FAA. Additionally, several firefighters with the Union Colony Fire Rescue Authority are also ARFF certified and trained in the operation of the airport's ARFF vehicles. Since ARFF services at general aviation airports are not required, it is apparent the commitment that the Airport Authority and its staff have made to improve the safety of operating at the Greeley-Weld County Airport.

## Summer Airport Projects Update

The Greeley-Weld County Airport undertook and completed several capital projects this summer which were reported on earlier in the year. We now offer an update as to those projects:

### Perimeter Fencing Project

The final phase of the perimeter fencing project, which began in 2004 was completed in August. This included 3,400 linear feet of new 8 ft. tall high tensil woven wire game control fence, which was installed along the southeastern perimeter of the airport property. With this project complete, the airport is now entirely fenced in with 8 ft. tall fence, and a reduction of incidents involving wildlife on the airfield is expected. This project was funded through the Colorado aviation grant program.

### Security Camera Project

A total of 15 new cameras were installed at various locations on the Greeley-Weld County Airport, along with a new digital video recorder. These cameras will provide a better level of information and security for the airport after a number of incidents over the past few years which have resulted in losses for both tenants and the Airport Authority. The most significant was last year when vandals entered upon the airfield and caused close to \$10,000 worth of damage to airfield and runway lighting systems and equipment. This project was also funded through the Colorado aviation grant program.

### Asphalt Improvements

Various areas of deteriorating asphalt throughout the hangar areas were removed and replaced early in the summer. Additionally, crack sealing was performed on the entire airport, and re-striping of taxiway hold bars and centerlines was accomplished on numerous portions of the airfield. This project was funded through the Airport Authority's operating budget.

### Other Projects

A variety of other maintenance projects were also carried out during the summer months, including upgrades and improvements to newly acquired snow removal equipment for the upcoming snow season.

## Webcams Now On-Line

With the completion of the security camera project, several cameras are available to view through the airport's web site. This allows local pilots to get a glimpse of conditions at the airport, or transient pilots an opportunity to check up on their aircraft if parked on the terminal apron.

Three accessible cameras provide a view of the terminal apron area, and one camera located on the airfield provides a shot of aircraft operations on the airport. To access the webcams, visit the airport's web site at [www.gxy.net](http://www.gxy.net), and scroll down on the home page to the webcam link. In order to view the cameras, certain ActiveX controls are required on your computer. If those controls are not already present, you will be prompted in order to allow them to load.

## Airfield Access for Tenants

As everyone is aware, the airport restricts vehicular access to the airfield for obvious safety reasons. However, on occasion, due to a disabled aircraft, a tenant may have a legitimate need to drive onto the airfield to assist in the recovery of such an aircraft. During hours when Airport Authority personnel are on duty, which is 8-5 each day of the week, tenants needing such access to the airfield should contact the terminal front desk to arrange an escort by the airport.

In those circumstances where airport staff may not be present on the airport, access to the airfield should only be undertaken by a tenant provided they are using a portable radio on Unicom, and making the appropriate radio calls prior to crossing any runways or driving on taxiways. This procedure is in place to help ensure the safety of all persons operating on the airport, both in aircraft and in vehicles.

## Winter Operations... Here Again!

Well... it's October again. That means we are thinking more and more about the imminent arrival of winter. The airport maintenance staff has already prepared the airport's snow removal equipment for the upcoming winter season. A few changes are store for us this season however.

The Greeley-Weld County Airport Authority is completely independent of the City of Greeley and Weld County when it comes to snow removal. The Authority now owns and operates seven pieces of heavy snow removal equipment, and a number of pieces of smaller equipment. The main snow fighting tools the airport has in its inventory include the following list of equipment:

- Two Oshkosh 2500 Series 18 ft. snow brooms with blowers.
- Two 3 ton dump trucks w/10 ft. snow plows.
- One Caterpillar 966 wheel loader w/20 ft. snow plow, and alternate bucket.
- One Ford A-62 wheel loader w/14' boxed plow blade, 11' angled blade, and alternate bucket.
- One John Deere 6410 tractor with 8' snow blower on the front, and 8' drag blade on the rear.
- Vericom and Tapley decelerometers for braking action/friction testing.
- Other small equipment, including a snow blower, and some good old fashioned shovels.

As reported on in an earlier newsletter this year, the two 18' snow brooms are new to the airport's inventory. They were acquired over the summer months from Denver International Airport. It is expected that this new equipment will improve snow removal activities on the airfield, and also provide for an improved surface as it relates to friction and braking action over traditional plowing methods the airport has employed in the past. However, we also realize that snow brooming is a new activity for the Greeley-Weld County Airport. While we have trained and prepared as best we can for the operation and use of this new equipment, we are also prepared to discover better ways to utilize the equipment as we begin to use it and understand its capabilities better.

At the beginning of each snow season, we like to remind our tenants of a few things when it comes to winter operations and snow removal on the airport:

1. Airport staff will monitor weather conditions when snow is in the forecast, and will inspect and issue NOTAMS with field condition reports when snow contaminates the paved surfaces.
2. If you plan to fly when snow is in the forecast, or immediately after a snowfall, you should call the Airport Assistant Manager, or Airport Manager, and provide your departure or arrival schedule, to ensure that we are aware of your plans. This will allow us to better accommodate any snow removal that may be necessary for your flight operations. Generally, airport staff will try and accommodate snow removal needs in advance of any known or scheduled flight activity. However, it is ***your*** responsibility to contact us and let us know of your plans. If we have no known flight operations, snow removal will generally not begin until 8 A.M. on the morning after an overnight snowfall. Calling us the day before with your plans goes a long way towards keeping you on schedule.
3. If you would like to inspect the runway conditions prior to flying, call airport staff first. Do not just drive out onto the runway. In almost all cases, airport staff will accommodate your request to inspect the runway surface conditions if you request so. If you drive out onto the runway, you are likely to be struck by a snow plow or broom vehicle, as visibility during plowing operations, and the ability to stop multi-ton trucks, is minimal under the circumstances.
4. During snow removal operations on the airfield, both runways will be NOTAMED as CLOSED, except with a 10-15 minute PPR. This means we need you to call us in advance either by phone or by radio over the Unicom frequency in advance of taxiing or landing. This will ensure that all snow removal equipment is clear of the needed runway, and we can provide you with the latest field condition information on that runway.

Braking action and friction reporting is provided in MU values only. Please see the explanation of how to interpret these on the next page. Our goal is to keep the Greeley-Weld County Airport as operational as possible through any snow event. Please call us at (970) 336-3000 with any questions.

## WHAT'S A MU?

Many pilots have recently encountered a new term when operating in winter conditions. Mu, or the Greek letter  $\mu$ , is the symbol used in physics to stand for friction, and is becoming more and more common as a way of expressing the available traction on a runway.

Pilots who fly international routes are generally more familiar with this term because runway mu values have been reported to pilots in Europe and Canada for many years. Pilots in the United States are more used to hearing terms such as “good”, “fair”, “poor” and “nil” used to describe runway braking action, and while some pilots' groups have been able to get information out to their members, mu values may still be Greek to many general aviation pilots. Currently, general aviation associations are trying to disseminate this information to their members, since studies have shown that subjective descriptions of runway braking action are of limited usefulness.

Why is a more objective method of describing runway traction needed? Because subjective terms are by definition subject to interpretation. What pilot would accept the following communication from air traffic control: “Cleared to land Runway 1, moderate wind from the left?” Yet pilots are provided no better information when told that braking action is “fair”, based on an airport employee's judgment derived from locking the brakes on a pickup truck. Even pilot reports vary so widely as to be impossible to correlate with one another. With objective mu reporting however, a runway in Maine having an average mu value of 25 will present a pilot with the same braking capacity as a runway in Montana with the same average mu value.

What if you haven't had any exposure to mu values at all? A short explanation may help:

The mu scale runs from 0 to 100 (or 0 to 1.00). A clean, dry runway in good condition will have a mu value of very close to 100. A runway with a layer of water on top of a layer of ice will have a mu value of very close to 0. In between, a clean, wet runway may have a mu value of 80-90, a wet, rubber coated touchdown zone 50-80; and a snow covered runway, 10-30. Since approved friction testers provide the same values in the range of interest during winter operations (0-40), the pilot is not burdened with having to interpret data based on a particular device. When mu values rise above 40, no report is given, since available traction is not considered to be a concern. Simply put, pilots should remember that the lower the mu value, the less available traction and the greater the likelihood of directional control and stopping performance difficulties.

As mentioned earlier, subjective reports vary too widely to establish a conversion between them and mu values, but pilot reports are still considered to be of value.

These reports will continue to be relayed by air traffic control, and should help pilots with little experience with mu values, interpret this information.

Efforts are on-going to establish a better correlation between mu values and aircraft stopping performance. Until work is complete and more precise information becomes available, the important thing is that the pilot should be provided with consistent, reliable, objective data which he or she can use in conjunction with other data (runway condition description, wind speed and direction, etc.) as a basis for informed operational decisions. With a little experience, pilots should find that mu values are much more consistent than subjective braking action reports, and thus more valuable in predicting aircraft ground performance.

The Greeley-Weld County Airport owns and operates both a Vericom computerized Decelerometer, and a Tapley Decelerometer, which provide runway traction in mu values. The Vericom device is the primary means by which the airport reports its mu values. The Tapley device is a backup.

During winter operations, these mu values, if lower than 40 (in accordance with FAA criteria), are published through the Notice To Airmen (NOTAM) system for three portions of each runway, including the landing zone (first 1/3 of the runway) midfield (center 1/3 of the runway), and departure end (last 1/3 of the runway). Each set of mu values will be specific for the runway landing direction only, since mu values for opposite direction traffic on the same runway may be different due to varying factors.

For more information, contact the Greeley-Weld County Airport staff during normal business hours.

## Airport Passes Latest FAA Inspection

The Federal Aviation Administration recently conducted its annual safety compliance inspection of the Greeley-Weld County Airport. The inspection includes on-site investigation into the manner in which the Greeley-Weld County Airport Authority maintains and operates the airfield portions of the airport. This includes pavement markings, visual nav aids such as Precision Approach Path Indicators, runway and taxiway safety areas, airfield lighting systems, maintenance, operations, and other areas.

Once again, the airport passed this inspection with zero deficiencies noted by the FAA inspector. This marks the fifth year in a row in which this annual safety compliance inspection has resulted in a perfect grade for the Greeley-Weld County Airport.

**REMEMBER...**The Greeley-Weld County Airport Authority is able to charge your credit card for monthly rent. Contact Mandy Longstreth at (970) 336-3003 during normal business hours.

## Access Card Audit Complete

Tenants and users of the Greeley-Weld County Airport were notified several months ago of an audit being conducted by the Authority of all gate access cards issued. The deadline for response to this request for updated information was September 25<sup>th</sup>. As that date has come and past, airport staff conducted numerous calls to those persons who did not respond by the original deadline, to try and confirm their possession and continued need for access cards.

All efforts by staff have now been exhausted on this audit. The Authority is now in the process of de-activating approximately 80 gate access cards which have not been accounted for, or which the persons they are issued to have not responded to our request.

If you have still not responded to our audit request, please contact Kevin Freiberg at 336-3002. If you notice that your card no longer works the next time you visit the airport, please come see us or call us. Once the necessary information has been verified, your card can be re-activated.



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