



When dealing with a raging grass fire, most people turn and run. Temperatures reach around 1,000 degrees Fahrenheit and smoke becomes so thick you lose all sense of direction. Very few are brave enough to be a firefighter, whose job is to run into the smelting blaze in order to save lives and property. But firefighters have bunker gear and tons of water carried on a quick moving brush truck to assist them in extinguishing the unpredictable demon.

Who would be brave enough to climb onboard a piece of heavy machinery, much slower than a brush truck, with no bunker gear or water to put on the flames, and head off into the smoke-consumed countryside?.....

Your District 1 and 3 grader operators!

These brave men are the reason many homes in Comanche County have been spared from damage or being destroyed during wildfires over the past several years. We take NOTHING away from our volunteer firefighters who spend countless hours each year responding to medical emergencies and fires, all without being paid, but our County Grader Operators are an invaluable asset during grass fires.

Comanche County Emergency Management Director Clint Wagstaff stated, "There have been several fires we could not have controlled without the quick response of our grader operators."

There are many times a grass fire moves too fast to extinguish it with water from brush trucks. Our grader operators are able to get ahead of the fire and create a “fire break” to slow or stop the fire so our firefighters can put it out.

“We consider our grader operators an extension of our volunteer fire departments,” added Wagstaff.



But these men aren't just brave; they are very skilled and precise. They have the ability to operate heavy equipment with poise during a very adrenaline-filled event, while keeping this expensive equipment, along with them, SAFE!

In addition to grader operators, other Districts 1 and 3 personnel provided essential support to the large wildfire operations. There is no doubt the Goodyear, Medicine Park and Meers/Ferguson Fires would have been much more difficult to fight without the additional personnel operating water tankers to refill fire trucks, fuel truck supplying gas for their water pumps and diesel or gas for the fire trucks, mechanics to make on-site repairs, and a service truck to air up tires, fix flats and mount new tires on the fire fighting vehicles.

For the many acres of property and numerous homes which have been saved, we want to applaud our County Grader Operators and support personnel by saying ‘Thank You’ for your selfless service. The Comanche County Board of Commissioners is proud to name you all ‘Employees of the Month’.

Employees of the Month listed in alphabetical order;

Mark Barefoot, Bobby Bay, Melvin Beeson, Bill Bigbow, Claude Blackburn, Dustin Boswell,

Bryan Bridges, Wayne Cassell, Josh Corbett, David Daugherty, Arnold Dale Fischer, John Mark Fisher, Tyler Fletcher, Bill Foster, Michael "Tim" Henson, Lynn Jensen, Butch Johnson, Dennis Long, Pat Riddle, Kenneth Roach, Flint Runyan and Jeff Sparks