

Pumper Unit

We had our pumper unit custom made. Sounds fancy-schmancy, huh? Not really, once you begin the search, it's actually the most practical way to do it! Our search began in a couple of ways. We looked for a ready-made unit but none had the functions or the size we wanted in one system. We asked around at organizations we volunteered with and none had a definitive answer; the answers varied from not sure because we've had it for years to we made our own unit; none were cited as from a specific manufacturer or retailer.

As well as knowing what we wanted, we knew what we did not want. We didn't want a unit that had to be loaded into a UTV or truck before use. These units are heavy – too heavy for the two of us to load it into the pick-up. We would need to call a few strong friends to come over to help load and then unload it (and risk someone getting hurt). Plus we did not want a pick-up driving through our prairies unless absolutely necessary. Our unit needed to be flexible – one that could be loaded and unloaded with just 2 people; one that could be transported to burn sites, used with either a truck or a UTV/ATV; and one that could hold enough water to handle a burn when easy access to refilling wasn't available.

After a bit of searching and asking around, we found [Sun Valley Fabrication](#) in Hollandale, WI. They do a good deal of custom metalwork for several industries including making professional firefighting pumper units for fire departments all across the United States. All this just 10 miles from us!!

The unit needed to be on wheels so it could be pulled behind a variety of equipment (tractors, trucks, UTVs, ATVs, etc) and loaded into the back of the truck and hauled to the burn site. Oh, and the final caveat – the unit had to be such that loading and unloading could be done with only 2 people!

We're pretty happy with how it turned out. Its maiden flight was the spring of 2012 and it performed admirably!

Here's the specification for the unit:

- Davey centrifugal firefighting pump with a 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ HP Honda engine
- 100 gallon tank
- hose reel with a hand crank that could hold up at least 150 of hose and could be locked in place,
- nozzle that could provide a wide or narrow stream of water with an easy shut off valve

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