

keep them running so we can respond to a call in the first place.
 "But we won't have that problem anymore. We've got two brand new trucks and they're ready to go."

Empire Fire consists of about 20 volunteer firefighters, who come from three or four different families in the Empire community. And Green said, like so many of

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Members of the Empire Volunteer Fire Department listen as a representative from Good Hope Fire Apparatus Company explains how to turn on and off the pump on new 2006 Kenworth Pumper/Tanker he delivered Sunday morning.

County roads in need of repairs costing \$8 million

► Second in a two-part series

By ED HOWELL
 Eagle News Editor

CARBON HILL - Walker County would already have enough on its hands to replace bridges, as the total estimated cost would be \$20 million. However, the county's engineer said last week that it would cost \$8.15 million to just do basic resurfacing.

However, the cost is four times that when one considers upgrading the roads to deal with heavy equipment, and there are other factors that also make it difficult to deal with keeping the highways in shape.

Roads that have already been resurfaced are sometimes in need of stripping, but crews can't get to them because employees are diverted to dealing with 911 signs, County Engineer David Edgill said. The cost to the county for diverting labor to that problem is approximately \$100,000 a year, he indicated.

Roads are also wearing down quicker because of other improvements. One, ironically, is Corridor X, which has required crews to repeatedly drive trucks down the side roads. Around some of the

same areas, coal trucks can be seen hauling around the area.

The sight of coal trucks is becoming more common, as some surface mine companies in the area have reportedly tripled in production over nearly three years. However, it only makes it more challenging for county road crews.

Edgill pointed out one road near Corridor X that deals with interstate work crews and coal trucks. The road was built to state specifications when work on the interstate started, and was given to the county for upkeep. However, work on the interstate has dragged on, coal trucks have come through and the road now the county's responsibility - needs work, even with the state standards.

"To build to hold up to coal traffic, you have to have considerable rebuilding," he said.

More work is needed with the basing and the road would likely need to be widened. As a result, the cost of work on such a road would double, he said.

Paving work is already expensive just looking at normal road surfacing for a county highway. It costs up to \$18,000 a mile to resurface a county road with plant mix,



Crews along the Corridor X, who have been using heavy machinery near the new interstate, are said to be part of the problem in terms of wearing out county roads which are now badly in need of repair.

Daily Mountain Eagle - Ed Howell

and about \$9,000 a mile just to tar and gravel, Edgill said, if one doesn't count labor, which is paid for usually by gas tax funding. If labor were added, it would cost \$18,000 a mile to tar and gravel, and \$35,000 a mile for asphalt.

Edgill used an in-between figure of \$22,250 a mile to look at the total county picture, as he does not know how much road work needed now involves asphalt and how much involves tar and gravel.

The consultants last week and determined, without county labor costs, that it would cost \$8,152,400 to get materials for or to contract to get all the county roads up to speed without bringing the roads to a state standard to hold up to coal, timber and other commercial traffic.

That would blow up the cost estimate to \$36.6 million, Edgill said.

Commissioners and Edgill identified 366 of the county's 1,187 miles which needed work now, or 31 percent of the county's roads. The breakdown includes 62 out of 248 miles in District 1 (\$1,379,500), 106 out of 304 miles in District 2 (\$2,367,400), 142 miles out of 356 miles in District 3 (\$3,159,500), and 56 miles out of 279 in District 4 (\$1,246,000).

He said district crews also

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Scouts to hold annual sign-up at school

By RON HARRIS
 Eagle Managing Editor

More than 1,100 young men in Walker, Winston and Marion counties already participate in either Cub Scouts or Boy Scouts.

Zac Lollar wants number to increase.

Lollar, the district executive for the Mountain District of the Black Water Council of the Boy Scouts of America, will begin week trying to encourage boys in first through seventh grades at schools in three-county area to sign for scouting.

Lollar will begin his campaign Tuesday, 16, at schools in Winston County. Later this month and into next month, boys and into next month, boys schools in the Jasper city Walker County school teams will have the chance to learn more about scouting.

"What we emphasize is how much fun scouting is," Lollar said. "We want to give them some opportunities to get outside and in the house playing games all the time. We want to give them other venues having fun."

Lollar, who grew up in scouting and achieved rank of Eagle Scout, said average he recruits believe

New al-Qaida: Outsiders yearning for a mission

LONDON (AP) They had roots in Pakistan, Behavior: "Al Qaida version 2.0 is almost more an The diffuse nature of the shape-shifting al-Qa-