

# South Dakota National Guard

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **SD Guard first in nation to receive new equipment**

By Sgt. 1st Class Theanne Tangen  
SDNG Public Affairs

STURGIS, S.D. – The South Dakota Army National Guard is the first state to receive four new 120M motorized road graders during a fielding ceremony May 17 in Sturgis. The 842nd Engineer Company of Spearfish, Belle Fourche and Sturgis is the first unit to receive the new equipment.

The National Guard is issuing 300,000 new pieces of equipment to units across the nation in order to ensure Soldiers have the best tools available to do their mission.

The need for new and improved equipment has been in the works at the National Guard Bureau level for the past six years, which became evident during natural disasters such as Hurricane Katrina in 2005 and the Greensburg, Kan., tornado in 2007.

“During the Greensburg tornado, where it basically wiped the town off the map, the governor announced on national TV that ‘we have Soldiers here supporting us but they do not have the equipment they need,’” said Maj. Gen. (Ret.) Raymond Carpenter, of Sturgis, former acting director of the Army National Guard.

Carpenter said Soldiers having to work with outdated equipment used from the Korean and Vietnam War era, as well as the Kansas governor’s announcement on television, fueled the National Guard to take action to ensure that Guardsmen have the necessary equipment to complete their mission.

Due to Carpenter’s leadership during his nearly 30-month tour as the acting director of the Army National Guard, funding was secured to improve the readiness of our Soldiers, said Col. Masaki Kuwana, chief of the Army National Guard’s material programs division.

“This is great for the state of South Dakota and the 842nd Engineer Company to be the first to receive this new equipment; it’s a tribute to General Carpenter,” said Kuwana.

Carpenter first enlisted in the SDARNG in 1967 as a 62 Kilo, a grader operator, and knows first-hand how the new equipment will help the Soldiers do their job.

“This is a magnificent machine with modern technology, it doesn’t have a steering wheel; everything is with a joy stick,” said Carpenter. “If I had a chance to operate this kind of equipment when I joined years ago, I would have thought I died and went to heaven. This equipment is a great add to the National Guard inventory. It allows us to do both of our missions in the overseas fight and emergency operations here at home.”

The SDARNG’s current graders are about 30-years old and have exceeded their life-cycle expectancy, said Chief Warrant Officer Brian Maschino, field maintenance shop supervisor.

“Overall they are in good condition but they did start to show their age when the 842nd returned home from Iraq in late 2004,” said Maschino.

There are many new advantages to having the new grader said, Maschino.

“All functions of the machine are computerized versus doing everything manually,” said Maschino. “With the old grader, the operator was always moving his hands from the controls to the steering wheel. Now, the Soldier can use the joy sticks, allowing more visibility on the task at hand.”

Some of the new aspects of the grader can only be understood and appreciated by someone trained as a road grader operator.

“The machine has shuttle shift capabilities – you do not have to bring the machine to a complete stop to switch directional control – the computer will automatically slow the machine and switch direction in a safe manner,” said Maschino.

This is a once in a lifetime opportunity for the National Guard to receive high-tech equipment and it is an opportunity that will not happen for a long time, said Carpenter.

“This equipment will be well taken care of because the National Guard members are the best maintainers in the military,” said Carpenter. “I think it is going to serve us well for many decades to come.”

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**120517-A-RN486-001:** The South Dakota Army National Guard’s 842nd Engineer Company is the first Army National Guard unit to receive four new 120M motorized road graders during a fielding ceremony May 17, 2012, in Sturgis, S.D. The new high-tech grader (right) uses six computers to operate compared to the old grader which was operated manually. Seen left, is the older grader used by 842nd. The National Guard is issuing 300,000 pieces of equipment to units across the nation to ensure they have the tools they need to do their mission. (SDNG photo by Master Sgt. Donald Matthews) (RELEASED)



**120517-A-RN486-002:** South Dakota Army National Guard’s Chief Warrant Officer 3 Brian Maschino, field maintenance shop supervisor, explains the features of the 120M motorized road grader to Maj. Gen. (Ret.) Raymond Carpenter, former acting director of the Army National Guard, during a fielding ceremony in Sturgis, S.D., May 17, 2012. The SDARNG’S 842nd Engineer Company is the first Army National Guard unit to receive four new 120M road graders. (SDNG photo by Master Sgt. Donald Matthews) (RELEASED)



**120517-A-RN486-005:** Maj. Gen. (Ret.) Raymond Carpenter, former acting director of the Army National Guard, talks to the South Dakota Army National Guard’s field maintenance shop for the 842nd Engineer Company about being the first Army National Guard unit to receive four new 120M motorized road graders during a fielding ceremony May 17, 2012, in Sturgis, S.D. The need for new and improved equipment has been in the works for the past six years at the National Guard Bureau level when it became evident during natural disasters such as Hurricane Katrina in 2005 and the Greensburg, Kan., tornado in 2007. (SDNG photo by Master Sgt. Donald Matthews) (RELEASED)

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